United Nations

S/PV.4109

Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4109th Meeting

Thursday, 9 March 2000, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Azad	(Bangladesh)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

Maintaining peace and security: Humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council

00-33543 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintaining peace and security: Humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Colombia, Egypt, India, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal and South Africa, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria), Mr. Vantsevich (Belarus), Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Mr. Dimitrov (Bulgaria), Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Pal (India), Mr. Kolby (Norway), Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan), Mr. Monteiro (Portugal) and Mr. Kumalo (South Africa) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation to the Permanent Observer of Switzerland to the United Nations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to the delegation of the European Commission to the United Nations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Now it is time to take up the theme of the open debate. It is a great honour for me to be able to preside over the open debate on the theme "Maintaining peace and security: humanitarian aspects of the issues before the Security Council". The subject of the debate is important and topical.

The Charter of the United Nations confers upon the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In acquitting this function in today's world, a broad, more proactive approach is needed. The reasons are not far to seek. There are occasions of flagrant violations of international law giving rise to a conflict. In many instances, the situation slowly worsens and a humanitarian crisis takes shape. Peace is difficult to achieve as, alongside the factors causing the conflict, there are humanitarian issues which need to be addressed.

In today's world, the rules of war seem to have changed. We have seen in the recent past how massive violations of international humanitarian law and human rights have complicated conflict scenarios. Civilians and non-combatants — and, particularly, women, children and the vulnerable — are not spared the most atrocious criminal acts. Attacks on the personnel rendering much needed humanitarian assistance are becoming commonplace. These personnel have been denied access to those who need assistance and their supplies have been looted. As the human cost of war increases, the chances of sustaining peace and security recede.

The Council has a responsibility to address these humanitarian issues relating to situations of conflict and to take appropriate action. The Council's consideration of these issues lays the groundwork for such actions in the area of peacekeeping and peace-building. Today's debate, I understand, is an attempt to discuss the areas on which the Council should focus its attention and the actions it can take. The issue of access for United Nations and associated and other humanitarian personnel, humanitarian components in peace agreements and peacekeeping operations, coordination between the different actors and the question of resources could be some such areas. I am confident that there will be a rich exchange of ideas and that the Council will be able to sharpen its focus on the areas of action required.

With these few words, I have the pleasure of inviting the Secretary-General to make a statement.

The Secretary-General: I wish first of all to pay tribute to you, Sir, and the Government of Bangladesh and its Permanent Representative for convening this meeting on a critical aspect of our work and our mission to end suffering and alleviate hardships around the world.

Let me at the outset express the hope that this meeting will build on the progress made at the first meeting of the Council devoted to humanitarian activities, hosted by Brazil last January.

The experiences of the past decade, from Africa to the Balkans to Asia, have taught us that our humanitarian mission holds both greater promise and greater peril than almost any other part of the United Nations work. We have seen how humanitarian action can save lives, but we have also seen how it can be exploited and abused by parties unwilling to abide by international humanitarian principles and only too willing to subvert such action to further their own inhumane policies.

As we meet today, it is clear that Mozambique presents us with a most urgent case of need. Even as the assistance in some places has been too little too late, I am pleased that the Council is addressing the plight of the people of Mozambique and that the overall response has been very generous.

Mozambique today is only the most urgent of a number of cases. Over the last year, from the Balkans to the Sudan, from Venezuela to Afghanistan to Central Africa, the world has been confronted with humanitarian emergencies that seem only to grow in horror and in pain. Wars and natural disasters, often joined in a terrible combination, continue to cause massive loss of life, tremendous suffering and great dislocations of peoples and groups. The need for effective humanitarian assistance has never been greater.

In all these situations, we must ask ourselves: Are we doing enough? Are we helping those most in need or just those most immediately in reach? Is our aid the right aid for the emergency in question? Is it affecting a conflict in a way that may perpetuate it rather than end it? These are the questions that we must keep asking in order to ensure that we provide the best, most effective humanitarian assistance. We must strengthen our capacity to bring relief to victims, but we must also devise more effective strategies to prevent humanitarian emergencies from arising in the first place.

I recently presented the case for better and more cost-effective prevention strategies for both man-made and natural disasters in my annual report on the work of the Organization. And within the United Nations, I have launched a major effort to develop a system-wide framework for warning and preventive action.

The fact is that humanitarian aid does not exist in a vacuum. In some cases — such as Mozambique today, or with the floods in Venezuela or the earthquake in Turkey last year — we face true natural disasters. In others, however, we confront man-made disasters which are rooted clearly in war and tyranny. From the Great Lakes to Bosnia, we have learned that while the humanitarian imperative is sacred, there is also a humanitarian dilemma. This is the dilemma that too often has forced us to provide food and clothing not only to the victims of conflict, but also to its architects. It is the dilemma that too often allows combatants to use humanitarian aid and its recipients as tools in war. It is the dilemma that at times has turned camps created for the needy and vulnerable into havens for extremists and bases from which they could continue their acts of hatred. It is the dilemma, finally, that makes clear that humanitarian assistance is no substitute for political action.

One thing is clear, however: these humanitarian dilemmas have made the global humanitarian mission more important, not less.

Today, I wish to emphasize three major issues facing humanitarian action: first, how such action can make a positive contribution to efforts to restore and maintain peace and security; secondly, how we can continue to make progress in integrating humanitarian and political-military elements of peace operations; and thirdly, how we can ensure that the legal and principled basis of humanitarian action is respected and strengthened.

It is clear that in many instances, the causes of humanitarian and security crises are the same, or that the one arises from the other. It is equally clear that while conflict and war are the main causes of humanitarian crises, involving violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and producing mass population displacement, such crises often perpetuate instability.

There are no more acute examples of this vicious and violent cycle than the current crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the crisis in Angola. The crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has implicated a dozen States and over 50 million people, and had its roots in the humanitarian crisis in the Great Lakes region.

It is clear, therefore, that humanitarian action not only serves to protect the victims of conflict from further loss and suffering, but can actually contribute to maintaining peace and security. This is true in both negative and positive terms. Negatively, weak support for humanitarian action can result in delays to refugee reintegration, lack of adequate assistance to demobilized combatants and failure to restore livelihoods or rebuild societies. In positive terms, effective humanitarian action to help civilian populations can give them a sense of stability, restore respect for human rights and lay the foundation for reconciliation.

It is equally important that humanitarian concerns be given early consideration when comprehensive peace agreements are negotiated, as well as in peacekeeping missions. This helps ensure that there is sufficient advance planning on the humanitarian side for operations undertaken to implement a peace agreement and that early efforts can be undertaken to mobilize resources for recovery in the immediate aftermath of a conflict, which is essential if there is to be lasting peace.

In addition, the success of a peace agreement frequently depends, at least in part, on humanitarian work, including permitting refugees to return or resettling displaced persons; giving assistance to demobilized combatants; restoring the livelihoods of people affected by war; and giving fighters alternative ways to earn their living. Recent examples where such humanitarian work has helped consolidate peace agreements can be found in Mozambique, Cambodia and Central America; more recently in Guinea-Bissau; and, hopefully, in Sierra Leone.

I also believe that we must rededicate ourselves to ensuring that the legal and principled basis for humanitarian action is maintained, respected and strengthened. The legal framework for humanitarian action in war is provided by universal norms embodied in international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law.

The basic purpose of these intersecting bodies of law is to ensure that civilians are protected from the impact of war, and when that does not occur, that the essential needs of all victims are met and their fundamental rights respected. We must do more to ensure that this principle is understood and applied in every part of the world.

Finally, I wish to make a few points about the vital issue of resources. As I have said, inadequate support for humanitarian action can have adverse effects — both by exposing civilians to the risk of increased suffering and by undermining the positive contribution of humanitarian action to peace and security.

The Security Council can strengthen its support for humanitarian action in at least three ways. First, it can press Member States to commit themselves fully to providing the financial support needed for humanitarian programmes. Recent Council efforts to do this in the case of Angola have shown a direct positive result. Secondly, the Council could consider including in peacekeeping mandates provisions for financing the early stages of post-conflict reconstruction and the restoration of the rule of law. Thirdly, the Council should address the fact that post-conflict peace-building activities are routinely hampered by the failure to sustain the flow of resources, leading to gaps between the provision of direct humanitarian assistance and the restoration of longer-term reconstruction and development.

The lamentable truth is that far too many of the peace agreements that are signed collapse before they are implemented or relapse into conflict after initial implementation — in part, because there are not enough resources to foster essential post-conflict recovery and stability. The Council must find ways to avoid this tragic and wasteful pattern of events.

In closing, let me express my gratitude to the Council for drawing the attention of the international community to the challenges facing humanitarian action. It is my hope that, from now on, humanitarian concerns will be fully integrated into the Council's efforts to foster peace and security. Only thus can we hope to fully grasp the humanitarian challenge and ensure that our assistance will reach those most in need.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his important statement and for his kind words addressed to me and to the Government of Bangladesh. Mr. Secretary-General, you have talked about the humanitarian dilemma. The purpose of our debate today, as I have outlined, is to address this dilemma. I am sure that what you have said about concrete actions will be heard around the world.

Mr. Fowler (Canada) (*spoke in French*): It is a tremendous pleasure to see you, Mr. Minister, presiding over the Council today, and also to have heard the characteristically timely and pertinent statement of the Secretary-General at the beginning of this important debate. I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Bangladesh for having convened this debate on humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council. We applaud your decision to deal with this important topic during your presidency, and we recognize Bangladesh's long and steadfast commitment to humanitarian principles.

The provision of protection and humanitarian assistance to war-affected populations has been and will continue to be of central importance to Canada throughout our Security Council mandate. While implementation of a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention remains the best means to protect civilians and to foster sustainable development, we nonetheless recognize that dozens of violent conflicts persist, and the Council must be prepared to respond quickly to situations in which populations are in grave need. This must be done by supporting their access to protection and assistance and by identifying political solutions to resolve the underlying causes of humanitarian crises.

Indeed, humanitarian action does not respond to the causes of conflict but to the needs of the victims. It is therefore essential that humanitarian efforts be matched by corresponding actions enabling political actors, and in particular the Security Council, to address and resolve conflict. These measures are particularly important because most of the humanitarian action carried out by United Nations personnel and other humanitarian actors takes place in the absence of international peacekeeping or peace support operations or any other form of international involvement.

(*Spoke in English*)

Humanitarian action in support of those caught up in war is rooted in both international humanitarian law and practice. The right of individuals to physical protection and humanitarian assistance, based on the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, is central. The Security Council has been advised time and again of instances where parties to a conflict have deliberately restricted access of humanitarian organizations to provide life-saving assistance. The Secretary-General has noted that effective and timely humanitarian action requires unhindered access to those in need. Canada firmly believes that the Council must continue, therefore, to be vigilant and forceful in calling on all parties to ensure full, safe and unhindered access to affected populations, including through the negotiation of special arrangements and codes of conduct. Where negotiations by humanitarian actors with parties to a conflict fail and the civilian population continues to be adversely affected, the Council must be prepared to take further appropriate action, drawing on the variety of tools at its disposal.

In instances where a decision is made to launch a United Nations peacekeeping or peace support operation, coordination between the political, military, humanitarian and development arms of the United Nations system is simply essential. The plurality of operators in the field poses an increasingly difficult challenge, especially when they come from such varied institutional cultures. We welcome recent efforts by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to enhance their lines of communication and to increase their information-sharing, and thus to better define the relationships between the special representatives of the Secretary-General and humanitarian coordinators, as well as those between the human rights and other components of United Nations missions. Further, we encourage the continuation of steps to improve collaboration between the United Nations and other humanitarian practitioners as well as the relevant regional organizations.

The main challenge is to define structures of cooperation that promote effective, integrated action and that also take advantage of the different strengths of the various players without sacrificing the advantages of independence, flexibility and specialization. Missions over the last several years have demonstrated that any confusion among political, military and humanitarian mandates can have a negative impact on the perceived impartiality of humanitarian actors and action. It is incumbent on the Security Council to ensure that the components of such complex missions are given clear mandates with sufficient resources to meet their objectives — a point which the Secretary-General made so clearly a moment ago.

Canada strongly supports the reference in the presidential statement we will issue later today to ensuring that humanitarian considerations are included in peace negotiations and agreements. This includes not only provisions pertaining to prisoners of war, but also, *inter alia*, to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

of former combatants, including child soldiers; the return of refugees and internally displaced persons in safety and dignity; the protection of minorities and promotion of human rights; and mechanisms for addressing impunity and reinforcing good governance. The significance of including such elements has been borne out in recent experience, including, for example, in Central America, Cambodia and Mozambique.

Finally, we also concur that full and timely support for the transition from relief to development is critical for ensuring that peace is indeed sustainable. Again, the importance of adopting comprehensive and flexible approaches that integrate political, humanitarian, human rights and development dimensions is key. As seen in Sierra Leone, Kosovo and East Timor, the timing of interventions is vital, and planning and prioritization among and between all protagonists — United Nations and other — must begin immediately and should clearly delineate responsibilities at the field level. We agree that bilateral donors, United Nations agencies and international financial institutions must remain flexible and seize opportunities to initiate programme planning during emergencies to facilitate the transition to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. We must also identify, tap and enhance existing local capacities. Grassroots involvement is simply a sine qua non for sustainable peace and development, and we must ensure that local voices are heard. Moreover, we believe that women's full and equal participation, at all levels and in all phases, from relief to development, must be continually promoted. Societies must ultimately have ownership over such initiatives and be responsible for the management of their own affairs.

The President: I thank the representative of Canada for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Dejammet (France)(*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. Minister, for being here with us to preside over this discussion, for which you took the initiative, a discussion that deals with all humanitarian aspects of the Council's activities. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and, through him, all the departments of the Secretariat that contribute so well to the preparation of our work, and in particular the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which keeps us regularly informed of the humanitarian aspects of situations with which we have to deal.

I would like to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General for the statement he has just made. We note its relevance, and we would like to say that we agree with his observations.

I shall be altogether brief in saying that the French delegation associates itself in advance with the much more substantial statement to be made shortly by the representative of Portugal in its capacity as President of the European Union. But I would like to point out that France is also in agreement with the draft statement the President of the Council is proposing for adoption at the end of this debate. The draft statement, undertaken on his initiative, takes up in their various aspects the overall humanitarian issues that the Council has already had to deal with in its previous debates on this subject. Those are issues that we should bear in mind when we are called upon to act.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility to deal with situations in which violations of international humanitarian law and human rights threaten international peace and security — as, for example, in East Timor. The Council therefore has the responsibility for continuing to deal with humanitarian situations in all aspects of its activities — as is the case with Iraq.

I would like to emphasize three subjects that the Security Council should bear in mind when it deals with specific situations. First, in the Council we should deal with humanitarian crises in a timely manner; otherwise they will degenerate, and finding a solution to them will become even more complicated. I refer as an example to the situation in eastern Zaire in 1996-1997. The Council had at the time begun to work on a response and had agreed on proposals, on which France supported and which had been drawn up with the very active support of Canada. But the Council did not ultimately follow up on those proposals, which it had agreed in the fall of 1996. The planned deployment of a humanitarian assistance protection force for refugees did not take place.

Unfortunately, today we can see the consequences of our inaction. Developments in the region force us to act under conditions that are much more difficult, in a place where prior intervention may perhaps have enabled us to avoid violations of international peace and security and may have helped us to save human lives. This is therefore an example of the need for the Council to act quickly when a serious humanitarian situation is brought to its attention.

Secondly, addressing the humanitarian aspects of crises is not a substitute for political action and for

dealing with the causes of such crises. We should not confuse humanitarian responses with overall reactions of a more political nature, which the Security Council is duty-bound to provide. Relieving the suffering of civilians is a necessity, and it is the task of United Nations agencies and humanitarian organizations. But this is not enough and it should not absolve the Council of its responsibilities for dealing with crises and conflicts.

Finally, humanitarian crises can reach such degrees of seriousness that, as has just been emphasized, the response can only be a political one and, in certain circumstances, one that will also require the use of force in order to put an end to large-scale violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Those violations in themselves threaten international peace and security and therefore fully justify the use of such action, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. That was the case in Kosovo. Under those circumstances the Council cannot but exercise the responsibilities assigned to it under the Charter.

The President: I thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): It is a great honour to sit here today before you, Mr. President. We are delighted that you have made the long trip from Bangladesh to chair the Security Council and to continue the tradition that the Foreign Minister of Argentina conducted last month, and that Vice-President Gore and Secretary Albright conducted in January.

This is a excellent opportunity to tell you, Mr. President, what a fine job Ambassador Chowdhury and your entire delegation from Bangladesh have done this month, especially in producing today's important draft statement. The fact that you are here today, Sir, illustrates your country's deep commitment to humanitarian issues, and your personal commitment to improving the ways in which the international community deals with them.

On a national note, let me take this moment to reiterate on behalf of President Clinton how much he is looking forward to visiting Bangladesh 11 days from today. He looks forward to a fruitful and productive dialogue on the ways our two countries can work together to advance our mutual interests. I think that, if he is lucky, he will get a chance to sample some of those fine Bangladeshi desserts that we all did on 1 March, courtesy of Ambassador Chowdhury, when Bangladesh took over the Council.

Today's draft statement is important because it illustrates the Security Council's engagement in one of the most tragic, intractable situations in the world today. From Bosnia and Kosovo to East Timor, Sierra Leone and the Congo, the United Nations faces the twin challenges of keeping the peace and helping to provide humanitarian assistance. These goals are not divisible; indeed they are mutually reinforcing. The draft presidential statement recognizes the inexorable relationship between conflict and humanitarian crises. Although our first priority must always be to prevent conflict, we must also be prepared to deal effectively with humanitarian crises if we fail. It is therefore imperative that we do as much as possible to see to it that humanitarian needs are integrated with our planning efforts.

We must define the needs and tasks of peacekeepers and humanitarian workers respectively. Today we take an important step forward. Peacekeepers need to be familiar with humanitarian and human rights law. They must to be sensitized to the need for prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases. They also need to know the fundamental facts in assessing human displacement. To this end peacekeepers must also be educated on, and familiar with, not only the Convention on the Status of Refugees, but the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement produced by Francis Deng, the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Internally Displaced Persons.

I am delighted that the Secretary-General and Mrs. Ogata, who is in New York today, and others are placing more attention on this issue. We had a meeting on it with Mrs. Ogata in the Security Council on 13 January, and I will be making another major statement on this very issue at the end of March.

We are deeply concerned about the inadequate and uneven protection afforded to internally displaced persons. We must re-assess and energize our institutional structures to deal with this. It is unacceptable that legalistic distinctions prevent people from receiving the same assistance simply because they are classified as something called internally displaced persons instead of refugees. To them, as I have said many times, they are homeless refugees whether they cross an international border or not.

United Nations humanitarian agencies have already undertaken to integrate the Guiding Principles into their doctrine; peacekeepers should do the same. I do not

personally believe that shifting responsibility by assigning different agencies to head operations in different areas will work. I believe that co-heads means no heads, and I am glad that we have the opportunity to keep attention on this enormous issue that affects tens of millions of people.

As we consider ways in which the United Nations might effectively coordinate peacekeeping, we cannot overlook the issue of the security and neutrality of these refugee camps. My Government has stressed these points in the past in the Security Council and in the Executive Committee of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). I offer them again today as we consider how we can comprehensively approach this body's responsibility under the Charter.

The Secretary-General's recent report on civilians in armed conflict and the resulting Security Council resolution are further testimony to the continuing interest in refugee security. Resolution 1208 (1998), on the security and neutrality of refugee camps, is an important tool for dealing with the problem of refugee security.

Resolution 1208 (1998) stressed the need for refugee-hosting countries to develop institutions and procedures to implement the provisions of international law. This is the bedrock of partnership on which UNHCR and the international community rely to protect and assist refugees. It includes such fundamental elements as locating camps away from borders.

The High Commissioner's "ladder of options" on the security of refugee camps outlined last January is a forward-looking and courageous initiative. Nonetheless, in some cases, the problems of camp security are so serious that the international community needs to consider measures higher on that ladder. For example, we should explore the use, in certain circumstances, by UNHCR of multinational civilian police to establish basic security within refugee camps or sites, and we should examine training programmes, not only for host country police, but for refugees themselves, to promote community policing.

Along with enhancing refugee security, we must also do more to guarantee the safety of humanitarian workers. The protection of these people who work so hard to assist those in need is the primary responsibility of States. Therefore, we call on all States where these attacks occur to investigate and bring to justice those responsible. We ask that the Security Council continue to explore proposals to reduce the vulnerability of both relief workers and refugees to attacks and intimidation.

The statement we have agreed upon today represents the Security Council's acknowledgment of a direct relationship between security and humanitarian crises. But now we must act on what we have started. This means concerted follow-up to improve planning and coordination, both within the United Nations system and throughout the wider humanitarian community. It means assuring that peacekeepers and humanitarian workers are trained and educated, and it means pressing our Governments and the private sector for the necessary resources.

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General and Ambassador Chowdhury, I thank you for your efforts and for your tremendous initiative in bringing us together today. I congratulate you, and our Government looks forward to working closely with you on this important issue in the future.

The President: I must thank Ambassador Holbrooke for his very warm and kind remarks addressed to me and my Government, and also my Permanent Representative, Mr. Chowdhury, and members of my Mission here. So then I thank you.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): Allow me, on behalf of the Jamaican delegation, to say how pleased we are to see you, Sir, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, presiding over the deliberations of the Security Council. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his statement, in which he set the framework for this debate and our future action on the humanitarian aspects of issues before the Council. We particularly welcome this open debate, as it provides opportunities for Member States to express their views, and we believe that this will provide a valuable input into the Council's work.

It has become increasingly clear that while severe suffering among civilian populations may be a consequence of armed conflict, such large-scale suffering can pose a serious threat to international peace and security. In fact, almost all the situations before the Security Council for consideration have a humanitarian dimension either in a direct or indirect manner. The Council must therefore address these issues with the greatest degree of urgency.

The tragic situation emanating from deliberate attacks against civilians, humanitarian workers and other non-combatants rests at the heart of today's discussions and demonstrates a clear need for the Council to continue to strongly insist upon full respect at all levels for the

principles of international humanitarian and human rights law. The Council must focus on the question of impunity by emphasizing the need for States to bring to justice those who target civilians, and we must continue to cooperate with the international criminal tribunals, which constitute important mechanisms for deterring gross violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

It is unfortunate that the practice of impeding humanitarian access to civilians and the deliberate targeting of humanitarian personnel have increased in several areas of conflict. The denial of humanitarian access by parties to armed conflict is unacceptable and should be condemned in the strongest terms. The attention given to this issue by the Council during our discussions last month was therefore very timely. While States have the primary responsibility to protect and provide for civilians within their territory and to ensure the safe, unimpeded access of humanitarian workers to civilians in need, the Council has a critical role to play in helping to create a secure environment for such assistance.

The role of peacekeepers in preventing and containing humanitarian crises, collaborating with humanitarian agencies in providing safe environments for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, monitoring ceasefire agreements and separating combatants from non-combatants has been vital in assisting with the protection of civilians. This role requires close cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the representatives of all the funds and programmes and the special representatives of the Secretary-General. In this regard, we wish to note the progress that has been achieved with regard to the actions taken following the Secretary-General's reform initiatives.

For humanitarian assistance to be effective, we must be able to count on the cooperation of the parties involved in the conflict.

The effectiveness of humanitarian action by the Security Council related to humanitarian situations hinges on several factors, including the complete neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian workers while respecting the laws and customs of the countries in which they operate, the proper training of humanitarian staff and peacekeeping personnel, the provision of adequate financial resources, of which the Secretary-General made mention, the need to ensure the protection of humanitarian personnel, the continued provision of assistance to populations in need and the inclusion in relevant peace negotiations and agreements of specific humanitarian elements which take account of the needs and special circumstances of civilian populations. This will help to advance the process of reconciliation, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of armed personnel and the resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Action on humanitarian grounds must not be seen as a substitute for action to resolve conflicts at the political level. Humanitarian action on its own cannot resolve conflicts which, by their nature, arise from political differences. Humanitarian action that is not complemented by diplomatic or political solutions can, in fact, undermine the effectiveness of humanitarian activities and may even make the situation worse.

In this regard, there are several considerations that must be given priority attention. First, there is no doubt that the elimination of humanitarian crises will enhance efforts by the Council to address the root causes of conflicts, which give rise to these complex humanitarian emergencies.

Secondly, greater attention to our role in conflict prevention is essential. The Council must react promptly to deploy preventive peacekeeping missions, where these are appropriate, and cooperate with other organs of the United Nations in order to adopt more integrative approaches to prevent the escalation of conflicts.

Thirdly, the link between the economic, social and developmental aspects of conflicts is crucial.

Fourthly, the Council must develop better coordination with relevant bodies within the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions for continued post-conflict reconstruction, rehabilitation and peace-building efforts to ensure sustainable peace. There is also a need for the Council to support moves from humanitarian action to addressing long-term economic and social development.

Fifthly, the Council must bear in mind that, while sanctions can be an effective tool to punish those who deliberately violate international law, they can also have a severe impact on civilians. The Council's attention to the application of smart sanctions, which punish those they are intended to punish while not resulting in serious humanitarian consequences, is therefore important to our debate.

In conclusion, my delegation again wishes to thank you, Mr. President, and the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, for the timely initiative in convening this debate and for the preparation of the draft presidential statement which the Council will adopt later today. We are confident that the Council will redouble its efforts to address those humanitarian aspects of armed conflicts which continue to pose a threat to international peace and security and that we will do our best to ensure an appropriate response in the interests of humanity.

The President: I thank the representative of Jamaica for the kind words she addressed to me, to my country and to the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh here in New York.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over this meeting of the Council. I would also like to commend the delegation of Bangladesh for convening this meeting of the Council to discuss the important subject of humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council.

The Council has, in the past, addressed aspects of the issue, but would certainly benefit from a further, more comprehensive and integrated discussion of the subject. The issue is important and relevant in the context of the conflict situations in our time, be they in Africa, Asia or the Balkans. In many of these conflicts, many non-combatants, particularly women, children and other vulnerable groups, find themselves helpless victims in situations beyond their control. They become uprooted and displaced in their own country or are forced to flee across borders for safety and are compelled to stay as refugees for months and sometimes years before they can return to their villages and homes. Indeed, in a number of conflict situations, innocent civilians are sometimes used as human shields or as pawns among the combatants. In other situations, such as in Sierra Leone, the most vulnerable of the civilian population, namely children, have been manipulated and used by the rebel forces as direct instruments of war, with traumatic consequences for these child soldiers and their families.

The defencelessness and vulnerability of these unarmed civilians in many conflict situations demand the serious attention of this Council. In such situations it is imperative for the international community, and this Council in particular, to take immediate and appropriate actions to ameliorate their tragic situations. It is incumbent upon the Council, in its consideration of specific conflict situations, also to deal with the humanitarian dimension of the conflicts and to consider appropriate measures. The Council, acting on behalf of the international community, in fulfilling its role as the United Nations organ charged with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, should make every effort to ensure their protection, the quick delivery of humanitarian assistance and their safe return to their villages and homes at the end of the conflict. My delegation believes that prompt and appropriate responses to such humanitarian situations by the Council would avert humanitarian tragedies of enormous proportions, such as the world has witnessed in recent times, much to the discredit of the United Nations and this Council in particular.

Clearly, the humanitarian dimension in armed conflict is an important element in the maintenance of international peace and security in view of their cause-and-effect relationship, which the Council can ill afford to ignore. The Council has an important role to play in addressing this issue. There should be close monitoring of conflict situations and early recognition of manifestations of humanitarian tragedies. Unfolding humanitarian tragedies should be highlighted in the early stages of conflict and efforts made in galvanizing coordinated international actions. Perpetrators of violations of human rights, who are the cause of so many of these humanitarian tragedies, should be identified and appropriately chastised and punished whenever possible. They must not be allowed to carry on their inhumane activities with impunity. The setting up of appropriate national or international tribunals to look into these cases would be a concrete deterrent measure to curb this culture of impunity, which is so prevalent in many conflict situations. Would-be violators of human rights should be forewarned that they cannot hope to escape from the long arm of the law, domestic or international, even after the end of the conflict.

It is equally important for the Council to ensure the safe and unimpeded access of humanitarian assistance to war-affected civilians and the safety, security and freedom of movement of United Nations and associated humanitarian personnel. The work of these humanitarian workers is as indispensable as that performed by peacekeepers, and in many ways more dangerous, because they are unarmed and vulnerable to armed attacks or harassment. Their selfless dedication and commitment to their humanitarian calling deserves not only our unqualified admiration but, more importantly, our sustained, strong support, which can be best demonstrated by ensuring their personal security while

they are on their often risky humanitarian missions. Peacekeepers can also assist in the humanitarian field if they are made more aware of the humanitarian dimension of their oftentimes complex peacekeeping duties. This can be done through integrating humanitarian components into peacekeeping operations and providing appropriate training in dealing with such situations, as well as familiarizing them with international humanitarian law and human rights. At the same time, the question of adequate funding for humanitarian programmes should also be given serious attention in any meaningful discussion of conflict situations in the Council, because without it, many of the programmes and activities in the humanitarian field cannot be effectively implemented.

The draft statement which the Council intends to adopt at the end of this debate reaffirms the Charter responsibilities of the Security Council and delineates the various measures which could be taken by the Council in the fulfilment of these responsibilities as they relate to humanitarian crises in armed conflict. While not exhaustive, the draft statement contains a comprehensive list of procedural and practical actions which the Council could take, either acting alone or in coordination with other international humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations. It is hoped that the highlighting of this issue through this formal meeting of the Council will serve to further sensitize both Council members and the international community as a whole to the seriousness of the humanitarian problems affecting civilians caught in armed conflicts. It is further hoped that this debate will galvanize international action for their amelioration, wherever they occur.

Of course, the measures that are being proposed will only ameliorate the dire situations of civilians in armed conflict; they will not solve the humanitarian problems entirely, which can only happen when the conflict is ended. This must be addressed separately in comprehensive fashion by the parties to the conflict. We should incorporate, as an indispensable element, humanitarian support. Until the conflicts are resolved, there is a need for the international community to highlight and ease the plight of the unarmed civilians and to ensure their protection, as well as the protection of humanitarian workers, under international law.

Hence, the importance of this debate in the Council on this issue today. In addressing this issue, it is imperative for the Council to be well informed, well coordinated and, most important of all, fully responsive.

The President: I thank the representative of Malaysia for the kind words he addressed to me and to the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Mr. Chowdhury.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to see the Security Council convened under your authority, Sir, at this meeting devoted to the theme "Maintaining peace and security: humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council". I thank the delegation of Bangladesh, especially Ambassador Chowdhury, for having taken the initiative of convening such a meeting, which gives us a useful opportunity to take a closer look at the role to be played by the Security Council in supporting the work of humanitarian organizations and improving the framework in which humanitarian activity is conducted.

I also thank the Secretary-General for his important statement.

These days, most conflicts which the Security Council must address are internal ones during the course of which systematic and massive violations of human rights are committed. In many cases, it becomes impossible to distinguish between combatants, civilians, peacekeeping forces, humanitarian forces and humanitarian and associated personnel. In some instances, protected persons are directly targeted by the belligerents. Mali resolutely condemns such acts and considers it urgent that they be stopped.

Because the security of peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance missions is of the highest importance in situations of crisis and conflict, the Security Council must, in accordance with its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, ensure the normal conduct of humanitarian action in a favourable and peaceful environment. In this respect, the Council must see to it that United Nations, humanitarian and associated personnel carry out their missions to the best of their ability.

In this regard, the parties to a conflict are obligated to allow the unconditional access of humanitarian personnel to all those affected by hostilities. Moreover, the Security Council must once again emphasize that obstacles to such access are unacceptable violations of international humanitarian law and that those responsible must answer for their actions.

Similarly, when the Council decides to deploy a peacekeeping operation or preventive mission, its mandate must be defined clearly and precisely. The personnel of operations to keep or restore the peace must also enjoy the necessary resources to accomplish their missions. The international community must bear the financial costs of such operations because the maintenance of international peace and security — which, I reiterate, is the primary responsibility of the Security Council — can be neither delegated nor subcontracted to others, including regional organizations wishing to undertake important commitments in human or financial terms.

My delegation also wishes to draw attention to the issue of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, as well as to the devastating effects of anti-personnel landmines. Most violations of international humanitarian law we see today have been committed with weapons of this category. While the primary responsibility for controlling the import, export and manufacture of light weapons and anti-personnel landmines falls to States, the fact remains that the Security Council has a role to play in this regard, especially through the imposition of arms embargoes. In this respect, my delegation welcomes the recommendation, made by the Secretary-General in his report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, that arms embargoes be imposed in situations where civilians and protected persons are targeted by the parties to a conflict or when it is known that the parties are behind systematic and widespread violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, particularly the recruiting of child soldiers.

The nature and scope of humanitarian action require a comprehensive and integrated approach to the management of humanitarian crisis situations. My delegation therefore believes that we should unite participants from various spheres in a single framework for action, so that they can work together on humanitarian activities and assistance.

In this regard, Mali firmly supports efforts to coordinate and strengthen the relevant United Nations bodies. My delegation is also of the view that the Organization would benefit further from the establishment of close cooperation outside the United Nations system that would encompass non-state organizations, civil society and regional and non-governmental organizations.

In conclusion, I wish to state that my delegation fully supports the presidential statement we are to adopt at the end of this debate.

The President: I thank the representative of Mali for the kind words he addressed to me, to my country, Bangladesh, and to our Permanent Representative, Mr. Chowdhury, for his initiatives and contributions.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over this important meeting of the Security Council. I should like at the outset to thank your country and delegation for their wise activities in the presidency of the Security Council, which they have assumed this month. We also wish to convey our appreciation to you for having devoted your attention to a topic of such importance as that before us today.

Humanitarian issues are not new to the discussions and work of the Security Council. Indeed, in exercising its prerogatives as the organ primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council has on many occasions addressed humanitarian aspects of the questions before it, in particular at the time of the establishment or extension of peacekeeping operations. Moreover, we have noted in recent years that the Council has given special attention to aspects as varied as, *inter alia*, protection for humanitarian assistance to refugees and others affected by conflicts, protection of United Nations personnel, associated personnel and humanitarian personnel in conflict zones, protection of children in armed conflicts, protection of civilians in armed conflicts, refugees and so forth.

I wish to take this opportunity to state the great importance that my country, Tunisia, attaches to continued action by the entire international community to address humanitarian concerns stemming from conflict situations. The initiative taken by the President of the Council and the contributions of its members make it possible for us to discuss a number of issues as components of a comprehensive humanitarian dimension, placing them in the context of their relationship to the Council's responsibility for maintaining international peace and security and outlining the general framework within which this body should approach these questions, bearing in mind certain consensus parameters.

Tunisia wishes to emphasize the following points. First, humanitarian activities are necessary in armed conflicts, because, as the Secretary-General himself clearly underscored in his important statement, this is a basic and undisputed duty of the international community. The United Nations, in particular the Security Council, should therefore shoulder its responsibility in this field.

Second, there can be no doubt about the merit of highlighting the humanitarian dimension of armed conflicts and of working to make that dimension an integral part of efforts aimed at ending such conflicts, such as negotiations to conclude peace agreements, the conduct of peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peace-building activities.

Third, we fully concur in the need for real action to be taken to tackle aspects relating both to access for personnel responsible for delivering humanitarian assistance and to the financing of that assistance, and the need for coordination among the various actors. There is a need for a concerted and coordinated strategy to enhance the effectiveness and impact of humanitarian activities and to bolster the role and the functions of humanitarian assistance as a factor that can promote rapid normalization in the framework of the process of settling an armed conflict.

Fourth, the conduct of humanitarian assistance activities must of necessity strictly comply with the principles of the sovereignty of States, their political independence, their territorial integrity and non-interference in their internal affairs, as articulated by the United Nations Charter and the international conventions in force, including those relating to international humanitarian law. These cardinal principles are still the essential foundation of the conduct of international relations and will serve to preserve the noble nature of humanitarian activities.

Fifth, a key factor in the successful conduct of humanitarian activities seems to be the need to secure the consent of the parties concerned, in particular the Governments of the countries affected by conflicts. There are certainly situations — fortunately, rare — where there are no central authorities or where the State is virtually absent. Nonetheless, even in such situations the cooperation of the parties is still important, for two basic reasons: in order to give humanitarian assistance activities for the victims the greatest possible chance of success, in particular by ensuring the delivery of assistance; and in order to ensure the safety and security of the personnel performing those tasks. Such parameters would help ensure that the international community did not fail to achieve the desired humanitarian objectives.

Sixth, humanitarian activities undertaken by the United Nations would gain from being carried out in close collaboration with the relevant regional organizations and, where appropriate, with the countries of the region.

Seventh, Tunisia reiterates the appeal it made at the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly for the definition of the purposes and principles of a policy in this field for the international community. The coordination of humanitarian activities, whether between the various bodies of the United Nations and its specialized agencies or between the United Nations and the other participants, including regional organizations, is essential so that the activities may be part of a comprehensive and integrated approach that will best serve the objectives set for alleviating the hardships suffered by civilians in times of war.

Eighth, we must not overlook the crucial issue of financing for humanitarian activities. In this regard, it is clear that sustained effort from the donor community is highly desirable, in particular to meet the real needs of the hardest-hit regions and countries, in the context of enhanced complementarity of bilateral and multilateral efforts.

Before concluding, I would like to reiterate our support for the statement that will be issued at the end of our debate and reaffirm Tunisia's commitment to continuing its contribution to the humanitarian activities undertaken by the United Nations and to augmenting the resources that are needed for those activities.

The President: I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me, to my country and to Mr. Chowdhury, our Permanent Representative, and his colleagues in our Mission.

Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi (Namibia): Allow me to congratulate your delegation, Mr. President, for taking the initiative to convene this open meeting on the item "Maintaining peace and security: Humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council". We thank you, Sir, for presiding over this important meeting. Let me also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General for his very important statement, which will indeed contribute immensely to our deliberations today.

The questions posed by the Secretary-General are valid and in our view warrant further and deep thought, without which we may not get it right.

Before making my remarks on today's topic, allow me to briefly touch on another humanitarian issue although it is not directly under consideration by the Security Council. The sheer magnitude of the problems and the fact that the country in question is in the process of post-conflict reconstruction compels me to do so.

I am talking about the immensely difficult time the people of Mozambique are going through as a result of the devastating cyclone Eline. We note with appreciation the pronouncement by the Security Council, in solidarity with the people of Mozambique, seeking support from the international community to enable the people of that country to overcome the devastating effect of the floods. In this regard, we warmly welcome the decision of the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of Portugal to write off all of the Mozambican debt. This is a very important and encouraging gesture by those two donor countries, and we appeal to all other States to do likewise. Mozambique needs all the assistance it can get at this very difficult time.

The holding of this debate provides us with an opportunity to reiterate once again the critical and indispensable role the Council can play in alleviating the plight of the war-affected populations on the one hand and the strengthening of the United Nations in the areas of peace-building, peacemaking and peacekeeping on the other.

Humanitarian assistance to war-affected populations has become an important and integral part of recent United Nations operations. Hence, recent peacekeeping operations have included various humanitarian components, such as the protection of children, demobilization and teaching respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. It should be emphasized that the Council's tardy authorization of the deployment of peacekeeping missions with the appropriate mandates, as well as the lack of adequate financial resources, continues to be one of the serious constraints to effective peacekeeping in some parts of the world. This has led to the continued suffering of innocent civilians — particularly women and children and other vulnerable groups affected by armed conflict. The case of the Sierra Leone conflict is a classic example in many respects.

Therefore, while recognizing that the consideration of humanitarian elements in peace negotiations is crucial, we wish to emphasize that where peace agreements have been secured, the Security Council must act swiftly to assist in consolidating the peace by facilitating the implementation of those agreements. By so doing we can avert humanitarian catastrophes and enhance peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building.

Furthermore, my delegation would like to underscore the importance of cooperation from all the parties to a given conflict in facilitating the safety and security of humanitarian personnel.

Let me now turn to the issue of prevention. Natural disasters are difficult to prevent, but the same cannot be said about man-made disasters. We strongly believe that the prevention of armed conflict is an important element of the Council's work in addressing humanitarian issues.

In his report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General rightly stated,

> "Taking prevention more seriously will help to ensure that there are fewer wars and less consequential disasters to cope with in the first place." *(A/54/1, para. 21)*

Therefore, early warning is the best way to avert tragedies in different parts of the world. The Security Council must continue to work to preserve peace at all times, irrespective of the fragility of the peace or the geographical location.

In order to prevent conflict, a sound understanding of the underlying factors is necessary. For example, in Africa, illicit trafficking in, inter alia, small arms and light and heavy weapons needs to be prevented. The relevant recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflicts and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871) need to be implemented.

Another critical area is that of strengthening the coordination mechanisms among the relevant United Nations organs and agencies, regional bodies, other intergovernmental and international organizations and other humanitarian actors. This will ensure correct approaches and complementary programming and avoid the duplication of efforts. It is in this connection that my delegation would appreciate it if the effective cooperation envisioned here could be extended to the host Governments.

My delegation fully agrees with the notion of ensuring the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian agencies to war-affected populations, as this will ensure the prompt and effective delivery of assistance to the needy. However, it is absolutely necessary — in a spirit of transparency and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State concerned — that the humanitarian agencies work in close cooperation with the

host Governments, whose primary responsibility is the security and protection of their citizens. This is not only a confidence-building measure, but will help improve the coordination, management and utilization of scarce resources.

Finally, let me say that it is indispensable that United Nations humanitarian organizations be supported with adequate financial resources. In this regard, the United Nations consolidated appeals should be funded adequatcly.

We look forward to the adoption of the presidential statement later today.

The President: I thank the representative of Namibia for her kind words addressed to me, to my country and to our Permanent Representative here, Mr. Chowdhury.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all I would like to join others in welcoming you, Mr. President, and in expressing gratitude to Bangladesh, to Ambassador Chowdhury and to the entire delegation of Bangladesh for preparing today's meeting.

Russia regards the humanizing of international relations as one of the most important aspects of establishing a non-violent world, which is one of the strategic goals of Russian foreign policy in the twenty-first century.

In this context, we believe that in the mandates of multifunctional peacekeeping operations approved by the Security Council, the important place being assigned to minimizing the human suffering associated with armed conflicts is absolutely justified. This work includes assisting victims of violations of international humanitarian law.

While not equating the functions of the Security Council with those of humanitarian organizations, we are convinced that, under the current circumstances, the Security Council must lend active political support to the activities of these organizations, and that humanitarian work in general must be backed up by the authority of the Security Council. We support the inclusion in documents adopted by the Council of provisions that require parties to conflicts to respect international humanitarian law, ensure the safety of international humanitarian personnel and allow unimpeded access to all those in need of assistance.

Humanitarian assistance should in no way be used as an instrument for exerting political influence on any of the parties to a political conflict, and it should be provided exclusively on the basis of the principles of neutrality and impartiality. The activities of international humanitarian organizations and of the relevant non-governmental organizations should not violate the sovereignty of the host Governments and should not be at odds with the political efforts being made to resolve a given conflict. This is an incontrovertible rule for the coordination of the peacekeeping, humanitarian-assistance and development-assistance efforts of United Nations organs and agencies.

Russia supports the expansion of the practice of consultations and cooperation between the Security Council and humanitarian organizations. This means first and foremost involving the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and all other divisions of the Secretariat here in New York in the planning and preparation stage of peacekeeping operations having a humanitarian component.

The experience of recent years has shown that the prevention and settlement of humanitarian crises has a direct bearing on the maintenance of regional and international stability. But it is also clear that we cannot end violations of international humanitarian law by taking actions that themselves violate the Charter of the United Nations. Arbitrary military measures that sidestep the Security Council — including those taken under the pretext of preventing so-called humanitarian catastrophes — are not acceptable and can only worsen crises.

Russia is open to the idea of working to develop criteria and legal frameworks for activities of the international community, including enforcement activities in cases of extreme humanitarian situations. However, such work should be carried out collectively, and firmly rooted in the United Nations Charter, thus enabling us to provide agreed decisions whose legitimacy would not be subject to doubt.

For these reasons, the Russian delegation supports the adoption of a presidential statement today on the humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his kind words addressed to me, to my country, Bangladesh, and to Mr. Chowdhury and all his colleagues.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China)(*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes your presence in New

York, Sir, to preside over this meeting of the Security Council. We wish to express our appreciation for the efforts made by the Bangladesh delegation, and especially by Ambassador Chowdhury, in arranging this meeting. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his important statement.

There are still conflicts in many regions of the world today, undermining political stability, economic development and people's livelihood in those regions to varying degrees, and often causing serious humanitarian problems. Innumerable innocent civilians have been affected by these conflicts; tens of thousands, sometimes even millions, are forced to leave their native lands; and vulnerable groups in particular, such as women and children, find themselves in extremely miserable situations. We are deeply concerned about this, and at the same time we wish to express our appreciation for the many efforts made by the relevant United Nations institutions and by international, regional and other humanitarian organizations in alleviating the difficulties facing civilians caught in conflicts. We urge the parties concerned to strictly abide by international humanitarian law, to provide necessary safety guarantees and to ensure unhindered access so that the humanitarian organizations can carry out their relief activities. At the same time, we are in favour of incorporating, as appropriate, humanitarian aspects into those peacekeeping activities authorized by the Security Council.

Like many other delegations, we are of the view that the Security Council, in fulfilling its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, and in reviewing situations of armed conflict, should also pay attention to humanitarian issues caused by conflicts and, especially, take into consideration factors such as humanitarian assistance. It must be pointed out that the recipients of humanitarian assistance are often countries troubled by economic difficulty, political instability and even armed conflict. These countries are vulnerable both politically and economically. As the purpose of humanitarian assistance from the international community, including the United Nations, is to help eliminate or alleviate humanitarian crises in those countries, the unique conditions and difficulties of the country concerned should be given full consideration in carrying out humanitarian assistance activities in order to avoid further complicating the conflict or situation that led to the humanitarian problems there and to avoid aggravating an already difficult or even tragic humanitarian situation. To do so, relevant humanitarian organizations, whether governmental, international or non-governmental, must fully respect the views of the recipient countries, adopt a just, equitable and unbiased position towards all recipient countries or parties and see to it that humanitarian work is not politicized. All parties concerned should be aware that they are carrying out humanitarian activities in a sovereign State; therefore, they should fully respect the laws and customs of the country concerned. Simply providing humanitarian assistance does not give them the right to dictate to the country receiving assistance; nor should they interfere in the internal affairs of a sovereign State in the name of humanitarian assistance. More important, humanitarian responses should not be employed as a pretext under which to use force against a sovereign State.

We cannot but notice with concern that, in recent years, the lack of financial resources has placed a great strain on humanitarian activities. We call on the international community to do more in this regard and to give equal attention to humanitarian difficulties and crises wherever they may occur.

We have always maintained that humanitarian issues should be addressed by treating both the symptoms and root causes. In providing humanitarian assistance and performing humanitarian activities, the international community should identify the deeper causes of humanitarian crises and seek their solutions. As is known to all, poverty and economic backwardness, territorial and border disputes inherited from the past and differences among ethnic and religious groups, among other factors, are at the root of unending warfare and worsening humanitarian crises in many regions. Therefore, it is very important to the fundamental alleviation and solution of humanitarian problems that the international community effectively help the relevant countries to eradicate poverty, develop their economies and create a favourable external environment for the relaxation rather than the intensification of disputes and conflicts. This is of practical importance.

In recent years, the Security Council, within the terms of its responsibilities, has considered and adopted resolutions or presidential statements on issues such as protection for humanitarian assistance, protection of civilians in armed conflict and humanitarian assistance to African refugees. These efforts demonstrate the aspiration and determination of the international community to resolve humanitarian issues.

It is our hope that today's open debate will serve to enhance the positive efforts of relevant United Nations

institutions aimed at alleviating and eventually resolving humanitarian problems.

The President: I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to me and to the Bangladesh delegation, headed by Mr. Chowdhury, regarding the excellent arrangements made and activities carried out.

Mr. Hamer (Netherlands): Thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's meeting. I am grateful for the tremendous efforts of Ambassador Chowdhury and his delegation in sharpening the Council's focus on the humanitarian aspects of its work.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his introduction. As always, he has identified the key problems in this area. We encourage him to continue to include humanitarian issues in his briefings to the Council. The Secretary-General's exercise of his prerogative under Article 99 of the Charter is an indispensable means of ensuring that the Council can discharge its duties in cases where humanitarian crises endanger international peace and security.

As the current holder of the presidency of the European Union, Portugal will participate in today's debate with a substantial statement on behalf of all members of the European Union, as well as 14 other like-minded European States. I will therefore limit myself to three brief comments that are to be seen in conjunction with the statement to be made by Ambassador Monteiro.

My first comment concerns the need for an integrated approach to the various aspects of the Council's work in this field. Many of those aspects rely for their practical implementation on a variety of United Nations organs and agencies, any number of which may be involved alongside the Council. The Council should therefore encourage the use of instruments such as strategic frameworks to provide for the integration of all relevant elements and actors.

My second point concerns reconciliation, to which the Secretary-General again referred today in the context of humanitarian action. Reconciliation is an essential prerequisite for lasting peace; also, there can be no reconciliation without accountability — and without accountability peace is invariably compromised. The Council should therefore always stress the necessity of the full investigation of war crimes and atrocities, in intra-State as well as inter-State conflicts, as an indispensable means towards national reconciliation.

My third and final point concerns the issue of internally displaced persons. We are grateful to Ambassador Holbrooke for drawing the Council's attention to this problem in such a forceful manner last month, and again in his statement today. It is unacceptable that civilians should be denied protection or relief solely because of their status as internally displaced persons. People fleeing the horrors of armed conflicts and terror should not be treated differently according to whether or not they have managed to cross an international border. Although the responsibility for the appropriate assistance belongs primarily to the States concerned and to the United Nations and other humanitarian aid agencies, the Council has an important role in making sure that this assistance can be provided and that sufficient and secure access to the internally displaced is provided. Furthermore, where the State concerned cannot provide for adequate safety and security of internally displaced persons, the Security Council must address the question of how best to secure such conditions.

The President: I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his kind words addressed to me, and to our delegation, headed by Mr. Chowdhury, for the excellent arrangements they have made.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): Today's debate proves that the consideration of humanitarian aspects of the maintenance of international peace and security has firmly taken its rightful place on the agenda of the Security Council. We are glad that this debate is being led by the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, whom we warmly welcome. The commitment of his country to humanitarian principles is well known and highly appreciated all over the world. We would also like to thank his delegation led by Ambassador Chowdhury, for organizing this important meeting.

As was stated on many occasions, there is a close interrelation between security and humanitarian crises. Warfare, whether internal or international, gives rise to humanitarian crises which, in turn, fuel further the escalation of conflicts and makes them likely to spread to other countries and regions. It is therefore critically important that when dealing with such situations the Council address humanitarian issues as part of its general strategy aimed at restoring peace and security in conflict zones.

As has already been pointed out by previous speakers, present-day wars are in most cases civil or

inter-ethnic conflicts that involve internal struggles among rival factions. Sadly, many of those conflicts also entail gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. More and more often we witness situations where the main purpose of warring sides is not to subdue the rival group, but rather to exterminate or banish it. In this event, civilians are not simply collateral victims of atrocities committed by parties to a conflict but rather become direct targets of them.

It is encouraging that these challenges are increasingly at the focus of the Council's attention. By addressing these issues the Council not only promotes the protection of civilian populations from the impact of war, but it also contributes to the goal of conflict resolution, thus advancing the maintenance of peace and security.

One of the most acute and recurring challenges in the context of maintaining access to war-affected populations remains the problem of the safety and security of international humanitarian personnel. In this regard Ukraine, as one of the initial sponsors of the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, reiterates its support for the idea of drafting an additional protocol to the Convention to provide legal protection to the currently uncovered humanitarian personnel of the United Nations and other international organizations.

It is also important to ensure that humanitarian concerns are fully taken into account in the negotiation of comprehensive peace agreements, and that the relevant humanitarian components are included in such agreements. The inclusion of provisions on the resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons, assistance to and re-integration of demobilized combatants, restoration of public security, establishment of a functioning judicial system, as well as other similar provisions in peace accords, has successfully prevented the recurrence of hostilities and ensured the return to normalcy in a number of countries and regions, among them Mozambique, Cambodia and Central America. In this regard, it would be extremely useful to take stock of the experience gained during the past decade in this area and to carry out an analytical review of existing peace agreements, as well as practices in peace negotiations, in order to formulate general approaches to preparing and negotiating future peace arrangements.

Finally, I would like to recall that the growing number of armed conflicts, as well as their brutal character, is to a large extent the result of poverty and decreasing resources, which bring about extensive migration of populations, unemployment and the growth of crime. In this connection, we wish to underline the role that sustainable economic development, the preservation and strengthening of the fabric of society, education and other factors can play in eliminating the causes of conflicts and in preventing them. As far as the mandate of the Security Council is concerned, the drafting and introduction of a long-term preventive strategy concerning the potential sources of conflicts can become one of the practical steps towards — as the Secretary-General put it — the start of "the transition from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention".

In conclusion, I would like to underline the importance of the draft presidential statement to be adopted at the end of our debate.

The President: I thank the representative of Ukraine for his kind words addressed to me and my country, and to our delegation, headed by Mr. Chowdhury, for the excellent arrangements made here.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): It is a great pleasure to see you here today, Mr. President. I should like, if I may, to join the tributes the have already been paid both to you and to Ambassador Chowdhury and the Bangladesh Mission for the really sterling work that they are doing during the current presidency of the Security Council.

We are very grateful to you, Sir, and to the presidency for taking this important initiative today. The link between humanitarian crisis and conflict is indubitable. That link has been highlighted recently in many aspects of the Council's work, beginning with the debate on human security during the Canadian presidency last year. It is right that the Council should carefully consider the humanitarian aspects of its work. Only then will it be able effectively to factor in this key element to its efforts to stop conflicts and try to prevent them.

It is a truism that humanitarian crises can frequently become the genesis of conflicts. But it is an invariable fact that humanitarian crisis arises from conflict. If the Council is to take full account of all the causes and consequences of conflict, in all its work, including conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building, then it must take full account of the humanitarian aspects. Here I should like to underline the importance of the points just made by the representative

of the Netherlands, which should give us all pause for thought and study.

The presidential statement which you, Mr. President, will deliver at the end of this debate sets out a number of practical humanitarian issues that the Council should and must consider. We welcome the work that you are taking forward on all of them. From the safe provision of humanitarian assistance to those affected by conflict to the incorporation of humanitarian issues in peace agreements: all need to be emphasized. These issues are essential components of a comprehensive strategy in the Council to deal with the causes and consequences of conflict. We hope that today's presidential statement will lead to concrete progress on all of them.

The statement to be made by the representative of the European Union presidency later in the debate will contain some detailed reflections on the issues we are discussing. In the interest of brevity I will not repeat them here. But I want to assure you that the United Kingdom fully shares and supports the views that will be expressed in that statement.

Finally, the United Kingdom would like to express our particular sympathy for the people of Mozambique and to encourage Member States and the humanitarian agencies to continue their efforts to deliver assistance and support to that troubled country.

The President: I must thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his warm remarks to me and also Mr. Chowdhury and members of my delegation. I thank him.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Argentine Republic welcomes the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh in the presidency of the Security Council. I would like to thank you, the Permanent Representative of your country, Mr. Chowdhury, and his delegation for having proposed a topic for this open debate which obliges us to face a very timely matter: the link between Security Council action and emergency humanitarian situations stemming from conflicts under its consideration.

The complexity and the magnitude of the emergency humanitarian situations that surround many of today's evolving conflicts constitute an aspect which must be included when considering matters related to peacekeeping and which demands the Security Council's attention. The scale of the conflicts and their destructive impact on the societies affected require that our Organization, in confronting those situations, take an integral approach, including aspects related to maintenance of peace and security and those related to humanitarian assistance in conflict and to post-rehabilitation and reconstruction of the devastated communities. In accordance with the Charter, the Security Council bears the primary responsibility for peacekeeping-related matters.

The attacks, assassinations, abductions, harassment and all kinds of physical and psychological violence directed against United Nations and associated personnel and humanitarian personnel that were considered during the open debate in the month of February constitute one of the more atrocious faces of the reality of conflicts. An important task that the Security Council can carry out is in the field of the security of United Nations and associated personnel and locally contracted personnel engaged in humanitarian activities. Of the ideas that were set forth on that occasion, I will refer to two today.

The first is the formulation of clear and viable mandates for peacekeeping operations, ensuring that those operations include appropriate modalities for security arrangements for humanitarian assistance personnel who work in the area of activity of the authorized operation, including free and safe access to the affected population.

The second is that the provisions set forth by the Security Council in presidential statement S/PRST/2000/4 deserve to be particularly taken into account in considering all appropriate measures within its scope to ensure the security of humanitarian personnel.

At the same time, the proliferation of attacks on defenceless populations and the use of attacks on civilians — men, women, children, the elderly — as a common tool in the struggle continues to cause grave concern to my country's Government.

When the harm suffered by populations is not an indirect result of a conflict between parties but rather the very objective of the dispute, with the goal of shifting support to one band or another or of eliminating a people for ethnic, political or religious reasons, the need to incorporate the humanitarian component of the peacekeeping mission that is being dispatched then becomes central to the operations. At the same time, there are emergency humanitarian situations which can affect the Council's actions to prevent or put an end to conflicts.

We must step up our efforts to continue to improve the Security Council's coordination with the agencies and bodies of the system engaged in humanitarian assistance activities, without distorting the particular function of each body or agency of the United Nations.

At the same time, new ideas need to be explored in order to address the question of legal protection of the populations affected by conflicts. In this regard, I would like to highlight the work being done by the Security Council working group responsible for studying the Secretary-General's recommendations on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, which may be a significant contribution to the Council in an important aspect of humanitarian actions.

Every moment in history holds its own particular challenge for the actors of international life. My delegation takes the view that the management of the atrocious humanitarian consequences of conflicts is morally the most pressing challenge that the United Nations faces.

The Argentine Republic undertakes to continue to do its utmost to enable the Security Council to make a contribution with the Organization in that work.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina for his kinds words addressed to me, Mr. Chowdhury and members of our Mission for the work they have done in organizing this meeting.

The next speaker is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to see you, Sir, preside over the proceedings of the Security Council, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of a country friendly to Egypt. We not only have friendly and affectionate ties; we also share cultural Islamic traditions that have impacted human civilization throughout history.

I would like to thank you, Sir, for providing us with an opportunity to participate in the debate in the Council today. The contribution, input and views of States that are not members of the Council are undoubtedly important and should be taken into consideration when the Council tries to formulate its position on any subject under debate. Our views are anchored in our conviction that, in dealing with specific issues, the Council's actions are undertaken on behalf of all Members of the United Nations.

Our first comment on the subject under discussion today is that the title of the agenda item provides a very loose framework for discussion, making it very difficult for many Member States to address the issue accurately or to speak about it in specific or definitive terms. The term "humanitarian aspects" can be used to raise various subjects and ideas and involves too many concepts and measures. Frankly, this makes it difficult to deal with the various dimensions or component parts of the question with any reasonable degree of confidence.

However, the delegation of Egypt would like to emphasize a crucial matter we have long discussed over the past few months and years: the importance of maintaining the delicate balance established in the Charter between the responsibilities and functions of the primary bodies of the United Nations, so that each one can fulfil its respective tasks without encroaching upon the responsibilities of the other. Today's debate should not, therefore, be interpreted to mean that the Security Council has become the executive arm of the United Nations system in all areas of its operations and activities or, indeed, of the United Nations system as a whole.

That having been said, we would like, within our understanding of the subject under discussion, to emphasize several points. First, the delegation of Egypt would like to reconfirm its commitment to the long-standing, steadfast position of the Non-Aligned Movement on the need to differentiate between peacekeeping and humanitarian activities. This steadfast position essentially proceeds from our conviction that both activities are premised on neutrality, and that by intervening on a general basis in humanitarian activities and relief efforts when the need arises, peacekeeping forces would strip those humanitarian activities of their neutral character and would make them a legitimate target when conflicts were renewed.

On the other hand, when the Security Council decides to incorporate, within a peacekeeping mission, functions relating to the protection of workers providing humanitarian assistance or relief to those in need of it on the ground, we strongly affirm that there is a need for the Council, within that peacekeeping mandate, to provide for the appropriate resources for United Nations personnel and troops so that they are able to fulfil such missions, as many cases, such as that of Bosnia, have clearly shown the extent of the danger inherent in such operations.

Secondly, the delegation of Egypt has noted that over the past months there have been persistent attempts by various parties, both from within the United Nations membership and from outside, to include vague concepts, or concepts that have not been agreed to, under the term, "peacekeeping", which has become too loose. Regrettably, such attempts, including those formulated outside official United Nations forums, are far from established concepts of peacekeeping, whether conventional ones or even the advanced and modern ones, which are scrutinized by many Member States with a degree of unease.

Furthermore, there is a potential risk, which I must highlight here, that the concept of peacekeeping operations as we have known them in the past might be eroded to such an extent that they might disappear altogether, to be replaced by new concepts that are developing along the lines of, for example, "peace operations". This matter must be determined by the General Assembly and its competent bodies, as they represent the full membership of the United Nations system. The ruling of the Security Council cannot be considered sufficient in this regard, especially given the fact that the General Assembly is the forum where the idea of peacekeeping operations originated, having been established back in 1957.

Thirdly, we note, on the other hand, the interest — indeed, the willingness — of the Council, within the terms of the Charter, to respond favourably in cases of conflict in which humanitarian assistance has been deliberately impeded. At the same time, we would like to emphasize that there is a need for such responses to be carried out in full respect for the operational rules for relief efforts and delivery of assistance to those in need, including respect for the national jurisdiction of the host country, securing its approval in advance in line with the guidelines annexed to General Assembly resolution 46/182, which emphasize the principles of neutrality, impartiality and humanitarianism that form the basis of such humanitarian activity.

Fourthly, as a follow-up to that point, the delegation of Egypt would like to commend the many non-governmental organizations for their humanitarian and relief assistance efforts, whether such efforts are made in cases of natural disaster or of armed conflict. The most important factor that lends credibility to and enhances the effectiveness of their role is the extent of their commitment to humanitarian and charitable causes and their total impartiality and integrity in dealing with humanitarian assistance cases. That must be coupled with full respect for national sovereignty and the national laws of the host country.

Fifthly, children are, perhaps, the group that is most seriously affected and vulnerable in times of armed conflict, whether they are used as fodder for war or are the victims of such conflicts in other ways. The physical, emotional, health and educational damage inflicted on them does not really end with the termination of hostilities. The adverse impact of such damage continues into the next generation. The suffering of women in war is no less severe. Paying adequate attention to women and children in post-conflict reconstruction and recovery programmes has therefore become a major component of post-conflict peace-building efforts.

These matters must be addressed so that the root causes of conflict can be eliminated and prevented from erupting again. From the perspective of the broad United Nations membership, this matter falls well within the purview of the General Assembly, which has the primary role in determining such matters. Indeed, the General Assembly was the body that developed the conditions of and criteria for post-conflict peace-building within the open-ended working group on an Agenda for Peace. It is the General Assembly that can reinvigorate the United Nations system in all its components, organs and agencies in order to rehabilitate any given society once conflict has ended and a crisis is resolved. Furthermore, it has the primary role of mobilizing resources to achieve that end.

Sixthly, the Security Council, in fulfilling its tasks, must act in compliance with all the provisions of the Charter and in conformity with the specific role and responsibility it has been assigned, in order to address all threats to international peace and security. We feel that we must be cautious in expanding the framework and concepts of the Security Council's responsibilities so long as there is no agreement on its recomposition, rules of procedure and current working methods, responsibilities and mandate. Otherwise, the Charter may be at risk of serious violation or the Council may fail to fulfil its tasks and to meet its obligations, which would certainly affect its role, prestige and authority in addressing all legitimate concerns in defence of the interests of the international community, as defined by a consensus of the membership of the world Organization.

Furthermore, we support the idea of ongoing consultation between the Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in order to achieve greater coordination and to avoid duplication. This would lead to complementarity in the functions of the Council, the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in dealing with conflicts at subsequent stages, in full respect

of the mandates of all organs of the United Nations, as laid down in the Charter.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for his kind words addressed to me and to my country. I also appreciate very sincerely his mention of the excellent relations between our countries. I remember my recent visit to Cairo and to my good friend, his Foreign Minister, Mr. Amre Moussa, as well my meeting with his President, Mr. Hosni Mubarak.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Belarus. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Vantsevich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Belarus welcomes you, Sir, as President of the Security Council and as the representative of a State that is an active Member of the United Nations and of the Non-Aligned Movement. We are certain that your presidency will enrich the activities of the Security Council and give them new dynamism and effectiveness. The Council's very busy working agenda this month reaffirms that conviction.

The Government of the Republic of Belarus welcomes the Security Council's increasing attention to humanitarian issues. The human factor has always been and remains a central link in all of the activities to establish international peace and security. Belarus, whose every fourth inhabitant was killed in the Second World War, knows the true value and significance of humanism and humanitarian activity. Focusing the attention of the Security Council on humanitarian aspects of the maintenance of peace and universal stability considerably enhances the role of that central organ of the United Nations in world affairs.

On the other hand, all those meeting today in this Chamber are very well aware that this issue has not become relevant by mere chance. Wars and conflicts, which have brought suffering to millions of people and take human lives every day, are today's tragic reality. An analysis of the international situation at the turn of the century and the millennium, regrettably, does not instil us with optimism for a substantial reduction of armed conflict in our world in the foreseeable future.

In this context, it is important to emphasize the substantial progress which the Security Council has made in defining the humanitarian dimension of mandates for peacekeeping forces. Belarus welcomes in particular resolution 1291 (2000), the Council's most recent on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Pursuant to that resolution, the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo authorizes it to

> "take the necessary action, in the areas of deployment of its infantry battalions and as it deems it within its capabilities, to protect United Nations and co-located JMC personnel, facilities, installations and equipment, ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel, and protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence". (*resolution 1291 (2000), para. 8*)

We are convinced that, together with other tools available to the Security Council — first among which is an effective arms embargo in the area of conflict — the measures undertaken will allow us substantially to improve the situation with regard to ensuring the safety of United Nations and associated personnel, which the Security Council discussed in detail in February.

Ensuring the unimpeded access of humanitarian personnel to all those in need in areas of hostility is a priority task for all United Nations peacekeeping missions. The monitoring functions for the enforcement of this requirement are the responsibility of the Security Council. The resolution on the Democratic Republic of the Congo inspires our optimism in this area. All those responsible for violating the rules of such access must bear the most serious responsibility, since timely assistance will, more often than not, determine what is most important: saving human lives.

In this context, the Security Council cannot further countenance criminal impunity, the consequences of which, as a rule, are tragic. In this regard, the question of the legal guarantee of humanitarian activities and of the need to establish real tools that will allow the world community to hold accountable all those who violate international documents of humanitarian law continues to be a priority of the work of the States Members of the United Nations. Without an effective solution to these problems, we will continue to bear silent witness to crimes committed against civilians, humanitarian personnel and diplomatic officials and to crimes against humanity.

Sanctions imposed by the Security Council remain a significant tool for ensuring peace and security. We are convinced of their absolute effectiveness in a number of conflict regions of the world. Angola can be taken as an example. The fruitful efforts of the Chairman of the

sanctions committee, Ambassador Robert Fowler, are no doubt having significant positive results.

Despite the effectiveness of sanctions in some regions, we remain witnesses to situations where a given enforcement measure plays an entirely opposite role. The situation in Iraq is a confirmation of this. We cannot remain silent over this contradiction in humanitarian activities. Resolution 1284 (1999), which, when it was adopted, inspired optimism on the part of many Member States as a possibility for overcoming a humanitarian crisis in that country, has not yet justified those hopes. We believe that this situation should be the subject of a detailed discussion by the Security Council in the very near future, in order to take the most effective measures to correct it.

The past year has been marked by new trends and approaches in consideration by the Security Council, and in fact by the entire United Nations, of a number of fundamental dimensions in humanitarian activities. The attention of the world community was drawn to the emergence of a concept of so-called humanitarian intervention. We are convinced that the basis of this approach is illogical from the start. We cannot put an end to war with war, or through anti-humanitarian actions correct human rights violations. The legalization of such an approach, in our understanding, is fraught with unforeseeable danger. In new circumstances, whereby the nature of conflicts has changed, humankind must find a compromise and find a true balance between the sovereignty of States and the sovereignty of the individual. We see, first and foremost, the United Nations Charter as a basis for this work. By way of an instrument for the discussion of this issue, Belarus has proposed the establishment of an open-ended group in the General Assembly. An important role could be played by the further implementation of the programme of action for a culture of peace. We are all witnesses to the many fruitful efforts undertaken by Bangladesh in this area.

It is quite obvious that the topic for today's discussion is becoming more relevant and richer in content day by day. Belarus is prepared to make its contribution to this activity and will do its utmost to give real content and meaning to the decisions of the Security Council in this sphere.

The President: I thank the representative of Belarus for his kind words addressed to me and my country. I invite him to resume the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3.30 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.35 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4109 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4109th Meeting
Thursday, 9 March 2000, 3.45 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Azad	(Bangladesh)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

Maintaining peace and security: Humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council

00-33549 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was resumed at 3.45 p.m.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran) took a seat at the side of the Council chamber.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries, Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, Iceland and Liechtenstein, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union welcomes Bangladesh's initiative to organize an open debate in the Security Council on this very important topic, which we view as being linked to the chain of thematic debates organized in recent months — all of which were aimed at addressing the serious problem of the humanitarian consequences of internal strife and conflict. We are particularly honoured to see you, Mr. Foreign Minister, presiding over this session.

These debates should, in our view, be considered as important steps in identifying possible actions to be undertaken by the Council aimed at preventing and, when necessary, putting an end to violence directed against civilian populations or the humanitarian personnel charged with assisting them. In its presidential statement of 12 February last year, this body expressed its willingness to respond to those situations. It is our hope that the findings and conclusions of the work done so far will lead the Council to decide on necessary action directed at deterring grave violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law and at fostering what the Secretary-General called in his latest report on the work of the Organization (A/54/1) a "culture of prevention".

The Union welcomed the Secretary-General's report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/1999/957). The Secretary-General's pertinent recommendations need urgent consideration. The Security Council is expected to give its first response to the Secretary-General's report in April. That will offer the Council an opportunity to discuss the problems in a concrete manner and to make proposals on how to improve the United Nations system to deal more efficiently with threats to international peace and security.

We should bear in mind, however, that humanitarian assistance cannot resolve conflicts that in essence have political origins. That is why it is so important to address the root causes of conflicts. The promotion of economic and social development and the establishment and consolidation of democracy, good governance and the rule of law, as well as full adherence to and implementation of human rights and international humanitarian law, are of great importance in conflict prevention.

The Security Council, through early response, has a duty and an irreplaceable role to play in the prevention of conflicts and crises. When necessary, a preventive deployment or another preventive United Nations presence should be swiftly considered by the Council. The Council has an important role to play in preventing violent conflict, and this perspective should be a natural feature of the Council's agenda. In the case of massive and ongoing abuses, the consideration by the Security Council of appropriate enforcement action based on clear and identifiable criteria may also be necessary.

Massive and systematic breaches of international humanitarian law and human rights law can constitute a threat to peace and security and therefore demand the attention and action of the Security Council. As a matter of fact, this body has already adopted a number of resolutions in the aftermath of massive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that it considered a threat to peace and security. There are several examples where the international community set aside its differences and united to exert pressure on violators of international humanitarian law and human rights law. We hope that this will become the norm in the future.

Increasing numbers of civilians, including women and children, have been specifically targeted or used as direct instruments of war. Non-compliance with binding obligations under international law by warring parties has become the norm in today's conflicts. The European Union is alarmed at the seriousness of the situation and deplores the persistent violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law. This situation is of course compounded by the lack of law enforcement mechanisms to which the international community can resort every time a serious violation of those norms and principles is committed.

In the fight against impunity, the European Union would like to stress the importance of the early activation of the International Criminal Court, and its important future role both in deterring grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and in bringing to justice those responsible for committing those crimes. We would urge all those who have not yet signed the Rome Statute to do so, and we urge all States to proceed to ratification as soon as possible.

It is a well-established principle of international humanitarian law that States have the primary responsibility to protect civilian populations from violence. Secure access to humanitarian assistance by all victims of armed conflict is a prerequisite of any humanitarian operation. State and non-State parties to a conflict are obliged to facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid and should cooperate fully to that end. There is also a responsibility on the part of the international community to facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid in cases where that obligation is not met. Denial of access to civilians in need, in breach of international law, and the targeting of civilian populations, which are often used as tools of warfare, must be condemned in all circumstances.

The European Union would like to encourage the Council to further act on the willingness expressed in the presidential statement agreed at the end of the debate last month (S/PRST/2000/4), and to be prepared to take all appropriate measures at its disposal to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian assistance missions and personnel — including the inclusion in peace agreements of provisions regarding safe and unimpeded access for humanitarian workers and supplies and the adoption of resolutions stressing that imperative.

The Secretary-General proposed in his report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict that the failure to comply with those obligations should result in the imposition of targeted sanctions. The European Union would like to encourage the Council to further develop standards and rules aimed at minimizing the humanitarian impact of sanctions.

The European Union wants to underscore the need to ensure safe and unimpeded access by United Nations or other humanitarian personnel to all those in need. The European Union would like to recognize at this juncture the extremely important role played by United Nations agencies and other humanitarian organizations — with special reference to the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations — in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to populations in need.

Much has been said about the changing nature of conflicts and the fact that the majority of casualties are innocent civilians, who are quite often utilized as instruments in the complex dynamics of conflicts. In this context, the European Union would like to encourage the Secretary-General to resort more often to the prerogative given to him by Article 99 of the Charter, in which he is invited to bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter that in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. For that purpose, we are of the opinion that it would be indispensable to improve and use the capacity of the Secretariat to enable the Security Council to consider ways in which it might regularly monitor potential conflicts or massive violations of human rights and humanitarian law, either through the use of existing mechanisms, such as the International Fact-Finding Commission, or by other means.

A number of other measures have been identified that can help alleviate the suffering of these hapless populations. Curbing the excessive and uncontrolled accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons is certainly one of them, given their potential to augment violence against civilians, increase the suffering of those affected, hinder post-conflict reconstruction efforts and reduce the prospects for sustainable development. The European Union encourages the Security Council to consider using its powers in a more decisive way to impose arms embargoes at the early stages of emerging crises.

As to the use of anti-personnel landmines, the European Union wants once more to emphasize the importance it attaches to the full and speedy implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of

the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. We are especially alarmed by the re-mining that is taking place in various conflicts. The European Union urges all parties concerned to stop this practice.

All States parties to the Geneva Conventions have an obligation to teach and disseminate humanitarian law to their military forces and, conversely, there is an obligation for these forces to respect those principles and laws.

The European Union recognizes the value of including a humanitarian dimension into multidimensional peacekeeping operations. Human rights tasks and humanitarian assistance, as well as other relevant conflict prevention and peace-building components — if they are to be included in the mandates by the Security Council — must be fully integrated into the planning of peacekeeping operations and their functions made clear from the start. Coordination of these components with others in peacekeeping operations and the attribution of the necessary resources available to achieve the mandates given are prerequisites for success.

We look forward to the comprehensive study on peacekeeping operations that the Secretary-General has just commissioned.

The European Union would like to encourage the Council to further consider modalities for the implementation of measures aimed at effectively separating combatants from civilians in camps designated for internally displaced persons or refugees. It is essential that international efforts are made to guarantee the humanitarian nature of such camps. Equally important is that refugees and internally displaced persons are placed at a reasonable distance from areas of conflicts or the borders. In this respect, the European Union would like to support a wider use of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, as well as the inclusion of its provisions in the mandates of United Nations operations.

We would also like to encourage the Secretary-General to continue to actively seek to ensure that the rights and the welfare of the child are afforded high priority in peace negotiations and throughout the process of consolidating peace in the aftermath of conflict. The European Union commends the inclusion of children's concerns in the peace agendas already adopted or in the process of being discussed for Burundi, the Sudan and Sierra Leone. The European Union would also like to highlight the recent conclusion of the additional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on child soldiers, which raised the age of participation in armed conflicts to 18 years.

The Secretary-General has suggested the establishment of safe corridors — or security zones — for the protection of civilians and the delivery of assistance in situations characterized by the threat of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We would like to encourage him to further develop modalities for the implementation of this recommendation.

With regard to confidence building, effective information is vital. The United Nations should therefore enhance its public information capability at the field level, namely through the inclusion of public information components at the planning stage of peacekeeping and peace-building operations. In this respect, it is also crucially important to prevent the media from being used as a tool of conflict.

Some developments have taken place recently to better coordinate humanitarian assistance and make it more consistent with the broader United Nations peace and development agenda. An example of this is the continuous development of the strategic framework approach designed, in part, to ensure that humanitarian assistance supports overall peace-building activities.

The strategic coordination of humanitarian actors at the field level should be further improved, including through better articulation of the responsibilities of both humanitarian resident coordinators and the special representatives of the Secretary-General. A recent welcome development in this issue was the elaboration of a "Note of Guidance" intended to establish clearer reporting requirements and lines of authority, as well as ensuring that United Nations humanitarian assistance is consistent with the broader United Nations peace and development activities.

The consolidated appeals process is an important strategic planning tool that facilitates the promotion of transition from relief to development. In this respect, the European Union would like to encourage the relevant Secretariat departments to reinforce linkages between the consolidated appeals process and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process when the two are being used together, as this will further enhance the cooperation and joint planning between relief and development activities.

Let me conclude by saying that we have already done much of the work needed to identify the actions necessary to prevent unwarranted human suffering. What we have lacked is the political courage to take those decisions. An immense effort will be required to overcome old, ingrained habits, but that should not discourage us from taking on this fight in favour of humanity.

The President: I thank the representative of Portugal for his kind words of welcome. The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of South Africa. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): It is a tremendous joy to see you, Sir, up there, and I am delighted that you came all the way to this meeting. I wanted you to know that those of us in the Non-Aligned Movement are really pleased at what your delegation has been doing in the Security Council. They are doing such a good job that some of us are even thinking of not joining the Security Council.

The meeting today comes at a very important time. Even though the subject is not quite related, our hearts go out to our neighbours in Mozambique and in Zimbabwe, who are devastated by the floods that have taken place in that part of the world. Our hearts go out to them. I could not pass up this opportunity to mention them, even though the subject here may be slightly different.

The Security Council has often witnessed in the past how a breakdown in peace and security in many countries invariably leads to humanitarian crises. These humanitarian crises in turn can fuel further instability and a breakdown in security.

One of the things that could be said about the Security Council is that it has an undeniable role to play in support of humanitarian activities. Already the Council refers to humanitarian situations in its decisions and communications on conflict situations around the world. These references highlight humanitarian difficulties and add political authority to efforts to address them.

While the Council has a role to play in humanitarian activities, we believe its actions should in no way undermine the principles of impartiality related to humanitarian assistance.

In Article 1, the United Nations Charter states that the purpose of the United Nations is, amongst others,

> "To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace".

It further sets out:

> "To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character".

South Africa sees the role of the Security Council in humanitarian activities as twofold.

The first role, which it currently performs, is to focus attention on humanitarian aspects resulting from conflict situations. In this regard, we believe that the humanitarian dimension should also be incorporated at the earliest stage in the formulation of peacekeeping mandates. Care should be taken to keep a clear distinction between peacekeeping and humanitarian activities.

The Council's second role, which we believe could be strengthened, underscores the need to address the safety and security of humanitarian personnel. Clearly, with the increase in intra-State conflicts, there is greater pressure than ever on the United Nations to provide humanitarian assistance. South Africa participated in the Council debate on this issue in February 2000. We still believe that stronger action is needed on this issue, as criminal activities against humanitarian personnel have yet to stop.

South Africa therefore supports three specific recommendations, which we believe the Council could implement. The first would be to undertake more concerted efforts to obtain commitments on unhindered access to civilian populations in conflict situations. The second would be to establish a system of monitoring such access, as well as criminal activities directed at humanitarian personnel. We propose that the Council invite the relevant United Nations bodies to report on a quarterly basis, in an open meeting, on humanitarian issues. Lastly, the Council could develop stricter measures and credible mechanisms to enforce penalties on parties who persistently, and with impunity, commit crimes against humanitarian personnel.

South Africa believes that the Council can also play a positive role in calling on the international community to provide resources for humanitarian activities. By

focusing attention on humanitarian crises which have resulted from conflict situations, the Council can inspire the international community to provide much-needed resources where they are lacking.

Ultimately, the Security Council should, in our view, promote a safer working environment for humanitarian personnel and, where appropriate, provide support for humanitarian activities.

The President: I thank the representative of South Africa for his warm words of welcome. His specific recommendations are very important and need our attention.

The next speaker is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Lunde (Norway): Norway welcomes the initiative of Bangladesh in organizing an open debate in the Security Council on the subject of humanitarian action. This debate will no doubt serve as a very useful continuation of the thematic deliberations in the Council on the humanitarian implications of conflicts.

Humanitarian action will not prevent the recurrence of mass suffering and cannot be a substitute for political action. The best remedy to curb the occurrence of conflict and violence will always be prevention. Norway therefore fully supports the Security Council's renewed emphasis on preventive measures. We expect this to increase capability to prevent violence against civilians and humanitarian personnel. What the Secretary-General has referred to as a "culture of prevention" must be instilled.

The Security Council should therefore carefully and consistently consider measures such as preventive deployment or other forms of United Nations presence on the ground. We urge the Secretary-General to make full use of Article 99 of the Charter, whereby he can bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter he deems may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. This requires the establishment of mechanisms for early warning to provide time and opportunity for effective preventive diplomacy and pre-emptive conflict mediation. A regional perspective should constitute an integral part of such efforts.

Internal war typically evolves from a wide or growing gap in political participation and distribution of economic assets. Therefore, building formats of governance that promote tolerance and assure negotiation and compromise are the best tools we have to prevent violence from recurring in fragile societies that are in transition from civil strife to peace. While meeting humanitarian needs, we must also aim to deal with the underlying causes of poverty and inequity. This requires us to view our humanitarian involvement in relation to our other efforts for peace, human rights, democracy and development. It implies strengthening systems of governance that are transparent and accountable and that encourage participation by an active civil society.

Gross violations of human rights, grave breaches of international humanitarian law, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide can threaten international peace and security and necessitate the attention and action of the Security Council. Awareness of the vital interplay between the international protection of human rights and measures to maintain or restore international peace and security is gaining ground. The Security Council should be prepared to contribute to ending violence against civilians and humanitarian personnel by appropriate enforcement action. This is already manifest in the response of the Security Council to the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Rwanda and East Timor; the Council has invoked Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter to react to such situations. The threat or use of force in international relations must have a legal basis in the Charter of the United Nations. A difficult humanitarian situation may be part of the Security Council's assessment of whether a situation is a threat to international peace and security. It is not, however, in itself a sufficient legal basis for the threat or use of force.

The United Nations should develop a united approach to violations of human rights and humanitarian crises. This will enable it to meet the immediate human concerns, to promote the overall credibility of the Organization and to deter possible future perpetrators from premeditated action or indifference. A common international understanding or norm would allow the United Nations to respond to human rights abuses and humanitarian crises in a timely and appropriate manner.

By responding with the apposite means and ensuring judicial follow-up to crimes against humanity, genocide and violations of international humanitarian law, the United Nations can provide deterrence against wayward action and enhance protection of civilians, relief workers and military personnel. We must ensure that war crimes and crimes against humanity are prosecuted. The adoption of the Statute of the International Criminal

Court in Rome in the summer of 1998 was a major achievement. Now, our efforts must be focused on seeking the speedy entry into force and implementation of that document. Norway also hopes for the broadest possible acceptance of this new institution by individual States.

Protection of civilians is a national obligation. States therefore have a common responsibility to revitalize a universal commitment to the principles of international humanitarian law. The Security Council should take all appropriate measures to ensure safe and unimpeded access to those in need and to safeguard all personnel involved in humanitarian assistance. The recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/1999/957) should be considered by the Security Council at the earliest possible juncture.

The uncontrolled, illicit spread of deadly tools of war, such as small arms and anti-personnel mines, fuels the horror of conflict. The prevailing effect seems to be the brutalization of the community at large. The Security Council should consider appropriate ways to curb the illicit spread of small arms. International cooperation between the many international, governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in humanitarian action is important, and has significant scope for improvement. A universal organization such as the United Nations carries a special responsibility in this regard. Improved cooperation is also paramount in building a systematic relationship between humanitarian action and longer-term development assistance and effective and democratic peace- building. There must be coherence in international humanitarian action, peace-building and long-term development efforts.

International sanctions are highly complex and riddled with dilemmas. The Security Council should continue its search for more effective sanctions through improved targeting on a case-by-case basis, while seeking to minimize the humanitarian impact of sanctions. Targeted sanctions should also be applied as a component of an overall comprehensive strategy for conflict resolution.

The President: I thank the representative of Norway for his kind words addressed to me and my country.

The next speaker is the representative of Colombia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to thank you, Sir, for joining us to preside over today's meeting of the Council for an open debate on the humanitarian aspects of the work of the Security Council. I should also like to thank the Secretary-General for the statement he made to us early in the meeting.

The holding of open debates, with the participation of countries that are not members of the Council, is something that my country values because it allows the Council to acquaint itself with the views of a large number of Members of the United Nations. The benefit of these debates is even greater when the topics under consideration are closely linked to the functions of the Council itself.

We acknowledge and share in the legitimate concern of the Council and of the international community at the magnitude and frequency of recent humanitarian emergencies. Some have been the result of deep-rooted social conflict; while others have given rise to conflicts that have, on various occasions, drawn the attention of the Council in its capacity as the organ responsible for the maintenance of peace. In either case, humanitarian emergencies challenge human solidarity and cry out for the right response.

We are convinced, however, that the Council will be unable properly to fulfil its mission of preserving international peace and security if it assumes the role, outside the scope of the Charter, of directing the response of the entire United Nations system to humanitarian emergencies. The attention paid to emergencies associated with any conflict must extend beyond the peacekeeping operations available to the Security Council. The approach must also encompass actions aimed at promoting economic and social development for the population that fall to other organs of the United Nations system, in particular the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

Any humanitarian activity is ultimately an individual or collective response to human suffering. That is why there is a range of different responses to humanitarian emergencies. Some come from States themselves, others from the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross or various humanitarian organizations. As far as the United Nations is concerned, General Assembly resolution 46/182 clearly reflects the Organization's ideal of humanitarian assistance, spelling out the criteria of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, as well as the prior consent of States receiving assistance.

We need to emphasize that action to address humanitarian emergencies requires both the consent and the cooperation of the State affected. Thus, when the Council acts through peacekeeping operations, it should take a number of factors into account. First, it must consider each case on an individual basis. Secondly, it must ascertain whether the circumstances are attributable to the State itself or to non-state actors. Thirdly, it must draw a clear distinction between States that cooperate with the international community and are part of the solution in overcoming a humanitarian crisis and those that do not and are therefore a part of the problem.

We should also ask ourselves whether the international community bears a special responsibility in remaining indifferent to manifest humanitarian emergencies even when a State has given its consent to action. Certain emergencies seem to attract more attention and resources than others, not always commensurate with the scale of the humanitarian situation; sometimes, they depend on the region in which the emergency takes place or on the publicity it receives in the communications media.

In order to bolster existing emergency response mechanisms, we need to hold the debate in an arena in which all Members of the United Nations participate. Otherwise, the actions of the Council could lead to confusion among States Members and other organs of the system, and might even exacerbate existing conflicts. Let us remember, for example, the ongoing debate on the humanitarian consequences of the sanctions imposed by the Council.

In conclusion, allow me once more to express my thanks for the opportunity to participate in this debate. I should like once again to express my delegation's wish that the matter be debated within the General Assembly, where all States Members can work together to give humanitarian action the proper guidance that the United Nations currently requires.

The President: I thank the representative of Colombia for the kind words he addressed to me and my country.

The next speaker is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): I would like first of all to express our thanks to you, Sir, for arranging today's debate on humanitarian aspects of the Security Council's role in maintaining international peace and security. We are particularly happy to see you in the chair as the Foreign Minister of an important country of our region, presiding over this important meeting on a subject of global concern with direct relevance to our own region.

Violence is an unfortunate and unacceptable by-product of wars and armed conflicts. The Secretary-General, through his reports, has repeatedly invited the attention of the States Members of the United Nations to the humanitarian consequences of conflicts in various parts of the world. His reports and the numerous debates in the Security Council on the subject have highlighted the magnitude of the problem and the threat it poses to international peace and security. It is our collective responsibility to ensure respect for international humanitarian law with a view to alleviating the suffering of people in conflict situations and to enhancing the global peace and security environment.

We believe that the most prudent and tested method of conflict resolution is through recourse to preventive diplomacy, as outlined in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. Pakistan believes that prevention is better than cure. This was best described by the Secretary-General in his lecture at the World Bank last October, when he said that the costs of prevention have to be paid in the present in order to draw benefits for the future by avoiding wars and disasters.

In our view, it is imperative that the international community, in particular the Security Council, address the root causes of conflicts and disputes and not merely attempt to treat the symptoms. Only then can preventive action yield the desired results.

In the post-cold-war era, the nature of conflicts has changed significantly, both within and between States. It is a painful reality that over a million people die each year in various conflict areas around the world. During the last decade, 2 million children have died as a result of armed conflicts and 12 million more have been rendered homeless in 30 conflict situations.

Another unfortunate consequence of conflicts is that there are over 30 million refugees in the world. Pakistan itself was host to more than 4 million Afghan refugees for over a decade during the Afghan war against foreign occupation. Currently, we continue to carry the burden of 1.5 million Afghan refugees.

Any study of wars and conflicts clearly shows that poverty and underdevelopment have accentuated conflicts.

This has been true in the post-cold-war era conflicts. It is a commonly held view that the best way to promote adherence to universally agreed humanitarian law in today's conflicts is through the implementation of the right to development and through poverty eradication. There is also a need to undertake long-term strategies by creating an enabling international economic environment in pursuit of the goal of poverty eradication.

The Secretary-General has advocated international preventive action in all humanitarian emergencies as a consequence of wars and conflicts. We must be clear and certain about the purpose, scope and legitimacy of such an enterprise. The prospects of preventive action must be studied within certain fundamental parameters.

First, the principle of State sovereignty and non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States must be respected. However, this principle cannot be extended to situations where people under colonial rule, foreign occupation or alien domination are struggling for their inalienable right to self-determination.

Secondly, for humanitarian action to find general acceptance, it must have legitimacy under international law. Such action must fully conform to the provisions of the United Nations Charter and be undertaken only with the explicit authority of the Security Council, after a clear breach or threat to international peace and security has been established.

Thirdly, a clear distinction must be maintained between, on the one hand, humanitarian crises as a result of wars, conflicts or disputes which by their very nature constitute threats to international peace and security and, on the other hand, other human rights issues. The latter fall within the purview of the United Nations human rights system and not of the Security Council.

Fourthly, the central role of the General Assembly as the only body with universal representation in the United Nations system must be maintained and in fact strengthened. There should also be no encroachment by the Security Council on the role of other United Nations bodies. The Security Council must operate strictly within its mandate. Principles should take precedence over expedients.

Fifthly, the Secretary-General may continue to play an active role in conformity with the responsibilities entrusted to him by the Charter.

International humanitarian action as a preventive measure can be credible only if applied without discrimination to all situations. There should be uniform criteria for involvement of the United Nations. It must be based on the principle of equal justice for all. Selectivity will erode the confidence of the international community in the United Nations.

The Security Council, which has the primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security, has not always acted on the basis of the objective requirements of a situation. It has failed, for example, to address long-standing conflicts with massive human suffering and systematic violations of international humanitarian law in a timely and effective manner.

This has held true in the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Rwanda, Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere. In the case of Jammu and Kashmir, which is not a dispute over territory but concerns the destiny of 12 million people, India continues to use brutal force to suppress the indigenous and legitimate struggle of the Kashmiris for their right to self-determination, as promised to them under the relevant Security Council resolutions. Kashmir is kept under subjugation by over 650,000 Indian troops. According to the All Parties Hurriyet Conference, the sole representative of the Kashmiri people, over the past decade more than 70,000 Kashmiris have been killed, 15,000 women and girls have been raped as a strategy of war, hundreds have been subjected to torture and thousands more are languishing in prisons. Custodial deaths, summary executions and disappearances are routine occurrences. There are few parallels in the annals of recent history for the Indian repression and State-sponsored terrorism against innocent Kashmiri men, women and children.

Selectivity in the implementation of the resolutions of the Security Council also raises serious questions about the Council's credibility. All resolutions of the Security Council must be treated with equal importance, and they must be implemented without any discrimination. The Council's resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir have remained unimplemented for more than half a century. The progress achieved in East Timor must serve as a model for resolving the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir in conformity with the wishes of the Kashmiri people. There cannot be different criteria for United Nations involvement in similar or identical situations.

The United Nations has often been subjected to strong criticism for not being able to effectively respond

to crisis situations. This lack of response has been owing to various reasons, including lack of determination on the part of the members of the Security Council, ineffective early-warning mechanisms, unreliable sources of information, restricted access to the conflict areas and inadequate preparations in terms of the availability of resources and personnel. We must therefore evolve a uniform strategy and strengthen the United Nations capacity, not only for crisis prevention and conflict resolution, but also for early and effective response to crisis situations irrespective of their geographic locations, in strict conformity with the Charter.

In recent years, the Security Council has been bypassed because of its failure to fulfil its primary responsibility due to differing perceptions among its members as to the proper course of action in response to a serious breach of or threat to international peace and security. Last year, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was forced to take unilateral action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in order to prevent massive and systematic violations of human rights in Kosovo. This development has also led to calls for streamlining the working practices of the Security Council.

The credibility of the Security Council is undermined each time it ignores a conflict and leaves it to the parties to resolve, or when regional organizations are asked to field for the United Nations. While cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations should be improved, we firmly believe that the regional organizations can play a limited role in the prevention of armed conflict in consonance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. In our view, the United Nations must play a more proactive role in the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts that cause humanitarian suffering and massive destruction.

I would like to conclude by expressing the hope that today's debate will contribute to the adoption by the Security Council of effective approaches to fulfilling its primary responsibility concerning international peace and security, as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations.

The President: I thank the representative of Pakistan for the kind words he addressed to my country and to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Austria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): I would like to express the gratitude of my delegation for the very positive initiative of the Bangladesh presidency to hold this open debate on "Humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council". Needless to say, and as previous speakers have already stated, it is a very special privilege for a Permanent Representative in New York to take the floor under the presidency of the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh.

On behalf of the Austrian delegation, I would like to state that of course we fully align ourselves with the statement made by the presidency of the European Union. I would like to make a few additional remarks, however, in Austria's capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

There is a consensus around this table that one of the most acute challenges we are facing today is how to act in humanitarian emergencies. There is also a convergence of views that a broad approach, embracing all policy instruments, is needed. This approach must include early warning, preventive diplomacy and effective means to address the root causes of conflicts. As has been stated, the concept of peace and security has as a result become more people-centred. The well-being of individuals and communities must therefore be the focus of our actions.

As a consequence, the effective conduct of humanitarian activity has to be a top priority of Member States. International organizations must be in a position to bridge the gap between early warning and early action. Last year's OSCE summit in Istanbul focused on the need to address humanitarian challenges quickly and effectively.

As Council members are aware, the OSCE plays an important role in early warning, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. Its comprehensive strategy addresses root causes of humanitarian crises, with a view to developing creative, forward-looking solutions. Austria, as Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, has put a strong emphasis on key issues such as the proliferation of small arms, the impact of armed conflict on children and the problems of internal displacement. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and their integration into the work of the OSCE is one of our priorities.

A very important initiative to bridge the gap between early warning and early action is the OSCE's

Rapid Expert Assistance and Cooperation Teams (REACT). REACT is a mechanism to identify, select and quickly deploy civilian experts to assist States in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. A task force has been set up to make the programme operational by the end of this year.

The OSCE is becoming increasingly involved in facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid by international organizations and non-governmental organizations to people in need of assistance and protection and in providing assistance for the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes. To enhance cooperation between humanitarian agencies, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office met recently with the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross and senior officials of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with the aim of improving cooperation and swift action in humanitarian emergencies in the OSCE region. UNHCR participates in the work of the Permanent Council of the OSCE in Vienna.

The OSCE also welcomes the important role of non-governmental organizations as crucial partners of Governments and the international community in the humanitarian field. To give an example, the OSCE has just opened a resource centre for the development of non-governmental organizations in Kosovo. In addition, we intend to strengthen and deepen the dialogue with civil society on the occasion of the upcoming OSCE meetings and seminars.

Permit me to address a further point: the cooperation among international organizations in the field of humanitarian action. Recent examples have demonstrated that close cooperation between international organizations can be mutually beneficial and enhance the impact of initiatives. The current cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations in places such as Kosovo, Tajikistan, Georgia and Bosnia is a good example. The multitude and complex nature of the problems the international community faces in Kosovo can hardly be solved by one organization on its own.

The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, our Foreign Minister, Mrs. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, is undertaking efforts to strengthen the close relationship between the OSCE and the United Nations. She recently visited Kosovo and will soon come to New York in order to identify further possibilities of enhancing cooperation between the organizations, especially in the field of humanitarian action and assistance.

The President: I thank the representative of Austria for his kind words addressed to my country and to me.

The next speaker is Mr. Jenõ Staehelin, Permanent Observer of Switzerland to the United Nations, to whom the Council has extended an invitation. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Staehelin (Switzerland)(*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. Minister, as well as the Bangladesh delegation, for having organized this open debate on the humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council in the context of the maintenance of peace and security. The number of statements made today in this Chamber, beginning with that of the Secretary-General, underscores the timeliness and the relevance of this topic.

At the present time, an armed intervention of the United Nations is sometimes the only possible solution to quell massive, repeated and deliberate violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Switzerland considers that the Security Council must be able to fully assume the functions and responsibilities assigned to it by the United Nations Charter. While it is generally recognized that this type of international operation involves a humanitarian component, that component cannot and must not be confused with the military and political aspects of a mandate.

Humanitarian action cannot replace political action. Furthermore, without a political solution as a foundation for a stable and peaceful future, there is a risk that humanitarian action may provide only immediate and provisional answers and that it may be unable to realize its full stabilizing and integrating potential for the reconstruction of societies affected by conflict. For this reason, too, all of the actors present during and after a conflict should be prepared to manage the transition from an emergency phase to the period of reconstruction and rehabilitation that, as we all know, is always delicate and fragile.

My delegation is of the view that, to ensure a comprehensive approach that takes account of the various aspects of a crisis, the humanitarian dimension should be integrated from the very start of planning and mounting a peacekeeping operation. Switzerland will follow discussions on this subject with interest.

With respect to humanitarian actors, better coordination is necessary. But coordination is also essential between humanitarian and political actors. The development of strategic frameworks, such as the one adopted for Afghanistan, responds to this need and seems to us a good instrument. These efforts should be continued.

Moreover, the attention and the resources of the international community should be mobilized in comparable terms in crisis situations and in the period of transition towards the solid and sustainable reconstruction of societies affected by a conflict. The consolidated appeals mechanism is an important planning tool. For its part, Switzerland endeavours to ensure an equitable allocation of the resources and means it provides for the various phases of a crisis. Likewise, Switzerland endeavours to ensure balanced regional distribution of these resources and means.

Humanitarian action is necessary, first and foremost because of the serious violations of international humanitarian law of which we are regular witnesses through the media. Switzerland, as depositary of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, attaches special importance to respect for this law.

The people affected by conflict are more and more the civilian population, particularly women and children. The proportion of civilians among those affected is constantly increasing, and has reached, in certain recent conflicts, an alarming figure of more than 90 per cent. Given the large number of non-international conflicts, Switzerland would like to recall here that the Geneva Conventions also contain certain rules that are applicable to these types of conflict.

Furthermore, it is indispensable to seek out new ways and means to exert greater pressure on the parties to a conflict to prevent violations of humanitarian law and to combat the impunity of the perpetrators. In that context, Switzerland calls upon the States parties to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols to fully assume their obligations for the suppression of such crimes at the national level. It urges them to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Switzerland looks forward to the early entry into operation of the International Criminal Court.

Full respect for the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence is a necessary condition in order for emergency assistance to reach the people in need — whether they be injured persons, civilian populations or prisoners. It is imperative that all parties to a conflict guarantee unhindered access to victims, whether that conflict is domestic or international, and that they guarantee the security of the personnel of humanitarian organizations. Denial of humanitarian access in violation of international law is inadmissible. Without secure, immediate and full access to victims, humanitarian assistance may be manipulated or may simply not be provided.

Switzerland is convinced that an extensive dissemination of humanitarian law and principles can make a tangible and positive contribution to the promotion of a culture of peace, reconciliation and understanding among people and countries.

The President: I thank the Permanent Observer of Switzerland for his kind words addressed to me and to my country.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of India. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Pal (India): It is a particular pleasure to see you, Sir, presiding over the Council. It is of course a pity that I cannot speak to you in the mother tongue that we share. As this is the first time my delegation has spoken in the Council this year, permit me to congratulate your delegation, as well as those of Jamaica, Mali, Tunisia, and Ukraine, on being elected to the Security Council.

Until this morning, we thought that we were being invited to speak on "The maintenance of peace and security: humanitarian action and the Security Council". This was itself the third recension of the theme. Today, we see that there has been a further change, and the Council is in fact discussing "Maintaining peace and security: Humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council". The fact that the 15 members of the Council have so clearly been unable to agree even on wording shows how controversial the underlying concept is. Humanitarian action seems to have become, in the Council, the love that dare not speak its name.

Though fudged, the theme still poses a question that has not yet been answered. In almost any issue that has to do with human beings there must be a humanitarian aspect, but does that permit the Council to take humanitarian action? No one has defined what humanitarian action means, and the jury is out on whether actions described by the actors as humanitarian

have been helpful. Some actions, driven only by humanitarian concerns, have had disastrous consequences — the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Others, essentially self-serving, have provided some humanitarian benefits, and therefore have been passed off as humanitarian action. Many of those could indeed be described as issues having humanitarian aspects.

The Security Council is a creature of the United Nations Charter. The Charter, which in Article 24 conferred on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, set out in some detail in Chapters VI, VII, VIII and XII what it could do to discharge its mandate. Nowhere does it speak of humanitarian action or aspects. It would of course be immediately argued that neither is peacekeeping mentioned in the Charter, though that is now the bread and many-flavoured butter of the Council's work. The crucial difference is this: Article 24 also made it clear that the Security Council acts on behalf of the membership of the United Nations, and this wider membership agreed that peacekeeping should be set up as a practical instrument. On what humanitarian action is, and whether the Council should have a role in it, there is no such agreement; the debate in the General Assembly last year made that clear.

It also became clear from that debate, and from what we have heard today in the Council, that those who advocate humanitarian action believe it should be used in three broad scenarios: against massive violations of international humanitarian law, to stop serious and widespread abuses of human rights and to provide relief for acute human suffering. Does the Council have a role here?

Humanitarian laws are codified in the Geneva Conventions of 1949. Though adopted soon after the United Nations was set up, there is no mention in them of the United Nations or of a role for any of its organs. This was not by accident. We are signatories to the Conventions, we abide by them, and we believe that they must be universally respected. It is true that terrible violations have been committed, including in 1971, on the territory of your country, Mr. President, Bangladesh. You must have therefore listened with astonishment to the Permanent Representative of Pakistan's vapourings about human rights violations. But the Conventions have inbuilt provisions to deal with contraventions and abuses. None of them call for action by the Security Council.

Human rights are also increasingly codified. Starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we moved on to the two International Covenants and to the many conventions and their protocols that now protect human rights and lay down the process through which lapses are dealt with. None of these instruments, which legally bind those who are party to them — which most States are — ask the Security Council to act even when there are major violations of their provisions. Human rights continue to evolve, but the most authoritative, recent and comprehensive statement of the collective view of the international community is the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993. In the preparatory process for the Conference, a linkage between human rights and peacekeeping was specifically discussed, and rejected.

Because there is no comparable legal framework for humanitarian relief, it might seem to be a greyer area, but it is the sovereign right of a State to determine whether it needs humanitarian assistance or not. If it chooses not to, it can hardly be forced by the Council, or any other body, to ask for or to accept it. Coercion or the use of force would be wrong in law, violating Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. International law, as it stands today, is clear. There is no provision in it for humanitarian intervention, which is shorthand for a right to take humanitarian action. As examples I offer the following.

The 1970 Declaration concerning Friendly Relations rules out any use of force between States not explicitly permitted in the United Nations Charter and prohibits intervention in the domestic jurisdiction of a State for any reason whatever.

In the 1986 Nicaragua case, the International Court of Justice ruled that the Declaration reflects the prohibition on the use of force under customary international law and rejected what was in effect claimed as a right of humanitarian intervention.

In the 1975 Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the participating States adopted a Declaration on Principles, in which they resolved to refrain in their bilateral and international relations from the threat or use of force, emphasizing that

> "No consideration may be invoked to serve to warrant resort to the threat or use of force in contravention of this principle."

International law, like any other law, changes and evolves. As it presently stands, though, if the Security

Council took humanitarian action, it would violate international law, not stretch it. In addition, there are two important reasons why the Council should be discouraged from going down this path.

First, when the Council acts under Chapter VII, all Member States have to respect its decisions. Even an action illegal under international law would be legitimized if the Council authorized it. The wider membership, on whose behalf it acts, might disagree, but would be powerless to undo the damage to law. Therefore the Council must not act in ways that would change, undermine or seek to develop international law; that is not its function, and it has been given no such power by the Charter.

Secondly, if it decided to authorize or to take humanitarian action, the Council would claim to act on behalf of the international community. However, the Council's membership is unrepresentative, and in its methods of work it does not welcome or accept the views of the wider membership. These are problems that are the subject of ongoing debate elsewhere. There would be well-founded fears that the Council would act not for humanitarian, but for less lofty, reasons.

We are told that it is all very well for us, in the comfort of New York, to debate the finer points of law, but when there is intolerable human suffering the international community cannot just sit back; it has the right to take humanitarian action to save lives and relieve suffering. Since all societies agree that rights and duties go hand in hand, then there must be a duty to take humanitarian action, and not just in the Council.

Simply as examples: the target of 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product for official development assistance was accepted by developed countries because they agreed that this was essential to help alleviate the terrible human suffering that underdevelopment and poverty bring with it. Will the Council demand, under Chapter VII, that the States that accepted this commitment honour it?

A State where the crops have failed and faced with famine should be able to attack a neighbour and rob its granaries, claiming that it had the duty to take humanitarian action to protect the lives of its people.

The Council believes AIDS is a security threat. Thirty-five million people are infected, and tens of thousands die each day. The pharmaceutical companies that have the monopoly on the treatment keep the price unaffordably high, using Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), to protect their profits. Should a State ravaged by AIDS have the right to take these medicines by force, if it can, citing a humanitarian duty to protect its citizens? Will the Security Council decide, under Chapter VII, that TRIPS does not apply for medicines that treat AIDS?

I do not have to belabour the point. This is a recipe for chaos and lawlessness in inter-State relations. It would destroy the edifice of international relations, built on respect for State sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. It would, in fact, return us to the freebooting practices which the United Nations was created to end. And in international relations, as within States, when the law is bent or stretched, it is the weak who bear the brunt.

What then of the actions the Security Council has already taken or authorized, and which have been described as humanitarian? Kosovo is cited as a case in point, but last year the bombing of Kosovo was described as humanitarian action. The Council was drawn in, after the bombing stopped, and set up the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Six months later, the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia reported that the only change was that the human rights of a different set of minorities were being massively violated.

There is in fact a very troubling pattern usually ignored or not acknowledged. In several countries, because of the suspicion now engendered that humanitarian assistance is driven by political motives, and that those who take humanitarian action also take sides, parties to a conflict have either targeted humanitarian workers or those they work for, or have refused them access. These fears can be allayed only if humanitarian assistance returns to its roots and humanitarian action is seen as apolitical, neutral and offered at request, in accordance with the guiding principles so clearly enunciated by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/182. The more the Security Council tries, perhaps with the best motives, to arrogate to itself the role to protect and promote humanitarian action, the more it is likely to work against the best interests of civilian populations at risk. The first of these humanitarian actions after the end of the cold war, in Somalia, ended disastrously, with repercussions which I do not need to remind the Council about.

The Secretary-General has often said that the international community does not respond consistently to

humanitarian emergencies. In 1998 natural disasters caused losses estimated at over $90 billion; preventable and curable diseases killed millions more that violence did. And yet it is on the macabre that the media fastens, often arbitrarily, sometimes with more political motives, driving decisions on which disasters the world and this Council should focus on and when. The media is not objective; it fixes the event, chooses the spotlight and relegates others to the shadows. It picks and chooses and creates "facts" and sweeps others away. It conjures up politically convenient realities. We have seen this in one theatre of conflict after another: the independent media as the handmaiden of power.

The Secretary-General's report to the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly last year kicked off a lively debate on humanitarian intervention. The Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement were categorical in the communiqué issued after their meeting on 23 September 1999: there was, they said, no right of humanitarian intervention. This was the collective view of countries representing two thirds of the membership of the United Nations. The Security Council, whose mandate is to act on behalf of the wider membership, would do well to pay heed to their voice.

But can we stand by and let people die, ask the proponents of humanitarian intervention, because international law does not permit it? Put like that, it places us on the horns of a sharp moral dilemma. But that is not the right question. When it addresses humanitarian crises, the international community naturally focuses on the immediate problem, not on the longer-term consequences. Superior firepower, mandated by the Council, might check forced migration, unblock food aid or put an end to genocide by paramilitary gangs, but unless we secure the conditions from which a measure of stability and prosperity might emerge, these evils tend to return. This longer-term consequence of humanitarian actions undertaken by the Security Council would imply that the United Nations should stay the course until a divided society heals itself. But, as with peacekeeping in the early 1990s, the number, size, complexity and duration of sustained humanitarian action would soon exhaust the coffers of the United Nations, forcing a sudden withdrawal. As then, that would make matters worse for the populations affected and for the United Nations.

The President: I thank the representative of India for his kind words addressed to us: my country and myself. The next speaker is the representative of Bulgaria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dimitrov (Bulgaria): I would like to express my highest appreciation to you, Your Excellency, Mr. Abdus Samad Azad, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, for conducting the present session of the Security Council in such an efficient way. My appreciation also goes to Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury and his co-writers for their important role in the initiation of this open debate on the humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council.

I am grateful, too, to the Secretary-General for his lucid introductory remarks and for his consistent efforts to strengthen the response to humanitarian crises as an essential element of the work of the United Nations. In this regard, Bulgaria commends his timely initiative to launch a major review of United Nations peace operations, which we believe will cover certain important aspects of humanitarian relief.

Bulgaria has aligned itself with the statement made by the Ambassador of Portugal on behalf of the European Union. That is why I will confine my intervention to some remarks which are of particular importance to my delegation.

The issue of international cooperation in solving problems of a humanitarian character are not new for the United Nations. Ever since the entry into force of the United Nations Charter and the first practical steps taken by the Organization, humanitarian activities have been among its primary purposes and responsibilities. A number of provisions of the Charter, beginning with the Preamble and Article 1, underline the will of the United Nations to take effective, collective measures for facing problems of a humanitarian nature.

From a legal viewpoint, therefore, humanitarian action, when needed, very clearly represents one of the major *raisons d'etre* of the United Nations. However, seen from the historical perspective of the past 50 years, the progress achieved so far in the development of international humanitarian, refugee and human rights law, as well as of the normative basis for the protection of humanitarian and associated personnel, seems to be insufficient to face the diverse challenges posed by the increase in the number and complexity of humanitarian crisis situations. It is our belief that the guidelines adopted in this regard by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the ongoing process for the adoption of additional legal instruments, will significantly contribute to filling the existing gap.

As the principal United Nations organ bearing the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should evaluate humanitarian crisis dimensions and related implications for regional stability, while discussing and providing for effective responses to conflicts. Furthermore, we must not underestimate the important preventive and — in a way — deterrent role of humanitarian actions if rendered in time. In these cases, humanitarian assistance must be an integral part of peace settlements and considered not only as a means of reducing or alleviating human suffering, but, in a broader sense, as a prerequisite for rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. Otherwise, the exacerbation of the humanitarian situation in a specific country or region could have unpredictable consequences, including the deterioration of the political situation and the reopening of the conflict.

A case in point is the recent developments in Kosovo, which proved the necessity of the full, persistent and adequate engagement of the international community in strengthening the transition from an urgent humanitarian situation into a stable process of rehabilitation and reconstruction. The Council must send a strong political message to the parties involved in the conflict to respect the rights of all persons, with special attention being paid to the protection of minorities and other vulnerable groups.

Past decades have singled out problems of ineffective coordination, selectivity in response, excessive caution, donor fatigue and the phenomenon of forgotten emergencies, among others. Taking this into account, and given the complexity of humanitarian assistance, it is our firm conviction that close cooperation and strengthened coordination are indispensable among the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations specialized agencies and bodies, regional organizations and international and national non-governmental organizations. Of significant importance in this regard are the United Nations guiding principles for the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance, adopted in 1991, as well as the agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council last year.

In conclusion, I would like to call on the Security Council and its members to continue to build closer formal and informal ties with the Economic and Social Council. While reassessing and reviewing the Security Council's working methods, my country is of the opinion that the implementation of Article 65 of the United Nations Charter can provide for concrete forms of effective cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Further interaction between these two principal United Nations organs may also include regular joint briefings and joint meetings.

The President: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for the kind words he addressed to me and to my country.

The next speaker is the representative of Brazil. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): Your presence among us, Mr. President, is a clear sign of the importance that your Government attaches to easing the hardships of those caught in humanitarian crises. We are grateful and honoured to see you presiding over the Security Council today.

It is a tragic truth that humanitarian crises recur all too frequently these days. They frequently derive from irrational human choices and epitomize the prevalence of violence over dialogue, the triumph of conflict over negotiation. The history of crises in places such as Somalia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo is well known.

The gloomy situation of disregard for basic rights and the outright neglect that characterizes so many humanitarian emergencies could instill a great deal of pessimism in those who worry about such tragedies. Although many situations are truly discouraging, to say the least, a generous movement of non-governmental and other organizations has not lost its impetus.

The complexities of assisting people in conflict situations are so daunting that we need to go beyond the spontaneous and — I insist — laudable work of non-governmental entities. The role the United Nations is to be a catalyst for international solidarity, so as to translate spontaneity into a comprehensive and coordinated effort to alleviate the suffering of those caught in distress and desperation.

We should ask ourselves a couple of questions. First, how can the United Nations as a whole improve effectiveness in humanitarian assistance? Secondly, what is the role of the Security Council in this context, and what are the limits and constraints on the Council in acting in this field?

In order to respond to the first question, we should recognize that any given complex emergency is a multifaceted phenomenon. In a sort of vicious circle, humanitarian crises not only and the consequence of armed conflicts but can also contribute to fuelling tensions that provide fertile ground for more violence. The flow of refugees and internally displaced persons is, to a great extent, a consequence of a combination of interrelated factors: disregard for humanitarian and human rights law, extreme poverty, the disruption of the social fabric and the lack of State institutions and basic public services. This list shows why such situations are called complex emergencies. The overlapping of a vast array of problems demands that efforts undertaken by the United Nations be coordinated.

Conflict resolution efforts must be coupled with short-term relief assistance, rehabilitation and long-term development programmes. The prerequisites to cooperation among all organs and agencies involved in humanitarian affairs are clarity of goals and effective coordination. By the same token, the interrelation of humanitarian affairs and security issues should not entail an automatic involvement of the Security Council.

Thus, the answer to my first question could be summed up in a word: coordination. The second question requires a more cautious answer, one that can hardly be summarized in one word.

The basis for the Security Council's action is, above all, the recognition that flagrant, grave and systematic violations of universally accepted international humanitarian and human rights law may pose a real threat to international peace and security. Security Council-mandated operations can contribute to improving the security of humanitarian personnel, but peacekeepers and civilian police are no substitutes for humanitarian agencies.

Whenever the word "humanitarian" is invoked, we should not forget the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, which are all the tenets of humanitarian assistance. The Council has the responsibility of addressing the political side of conflicts and, while doing so, it should bear in mind the humanitarian aspects related to conflicts.

A tentative answer to my second question should take into consideration a few points. First, the role of the Security Council is to add to the work of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and other humanitarian bodies and organs without trying to replace them.

Secondly, the convening of open debates like today's is useful and may be an opportunity to mobilize public opinion in donor countries and create a synergy among humanitarian agencies. In this regard, international attention, we hope, could be a vehicle to obtain more funds for the relief, reconstruction and development of the countries suffering from humanitarian crises.

Thirdly, the Council must take action only on extreme cases that pose real threats to international peace and security — which, unfortunately, are not infrequent. It is clear that the use of force can be allowed only by the Security Council, pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations.

Fourthly, the Council's decisions can contribute to improving the environment for humanitarian assistance, but the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council keep the primary responsibility in providing policy guidance for the efforts deployed by the system.

Fifthly, if the Council is to preserve credibility while dealing with humanitarian issues, it must avoid selectivity. The focus of its decision should not be determined by the level of media exposure, but by the real humanitarian and security situation on the ground.

Finally, Security Council decisions should take into account the need to preserve the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian assistance. Many organizations have been concerned that the use of the military for humanitarian activities, particularly in the context of Chapter VII operations, affects their ability to assist victims on all sides of the conflict.

Having said that, allow me to highlight a few concrete ways in which the Council might contribute to solving pressing humanitarian problems.

Through diplomacy, the Council may persuade warring parties to accept in practice the principle of safe and unimpeded access to those in need. When diplomacy and negotiations are not effective, the Council has at its disposal deterrent measures, such as indicating the possibility of bringing to justice those responsible for abuses. The Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia are good examples. The establishment of the International Criminal Court will be a leap forward in

combating impunity for crimes that are at the heart of today's humanitarian crises.

As a last resort, the Council may adopt enforcement measures, such as arms embargoes. It is essential that the Council set up reliable mechanisms with a view to monitoring the flow of weapons to regions torn by armed conflicts. The developing of "smart sanctions" is also an important alternative that should not be ruled out. By definition, such sanctions target the individuals who are directly responsible for wrongdoing.

I could go on and touch upon other areas, such as the use of troops or civilian police to prevent the diversion of aid for political or military purposes, but there is no need to be exhaustive. It is the rationale behind such examples that is important to retain in this context. The Council's actions can be conducive to a climate of compliance with international humanitarian and human rights obligations, which would have an obvious positive impact on the humanitarian situation.

The main challenge for the Security Council is to take measures, within the purview of its mandate, to bring the dire reality of modern conflict closer to the lofty ideals enshrined in international humanitarian and human rights law.

The President: I thank the representative of Brazil for the kind words he addressed to my country and to myself.

The next speaker is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over our debate as the Foreign Minister of a country friendly to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Allow me also to express my appreciation and thanks to Mr. Chowdhury and his colleagues for organizing this open debate on the very important issue of humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council.

Several humanitarian crises in 1999, especially those in Kosovo and East Timor, helped intensify the discussion of how the international community should deal with humanitarian catastrophes. In the face of most such crises, there is a consensus on the need for immediate action to stop grave crimes, such as ethnic cleansing. We also believe that the international community cannot stand by and let thousands of people suffer gross and systematic violations of their fundamental rights.

Having already pronounced ourselves in favour of resolute action against the perpetrators of crimes in humanitarian crises, we believe that any international action, especially the use of force, must emanate from the Security Council as the organ primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, provided that it acts strictly in accordance with the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter.

Undoubtedly, the international community has no other universally accepted legal basis for responding to unjustifiable acts of violence threatening international peace and security than the United Nations. It is within this Organization that we must overcome political limitations to be able to take action within the framework of the Charter. A key factor in this regard is prompt and early preventive action to ensure that most potential or actual crises are dealt with by peaceful means. The United Nations should opt for resolving conflicts before the necessity arises to resort to forceful actions.

It is clear that violations of international humanitarian law can be stopped only by taking action that is in accordance with the Charter. Lawlessness can be suppressed only by lawful methods. If we accept interventions outside the United Nations framework, we may be opening a Pandora's box, for there will always be some tendencies to cover the sinister designs for expansion through the use of force under the pretext of humanitarianism and the protection of minorities and ethnic groups.

Here, I would like to emphasize that we should not be driven to destroy the legal basis of what we know of as the state in the process of furthering humanitarian causes. Hence, we must remain vigilant against a growing trend towards undermining the principle of national sovereignty — one of the principles on which the United Nations itself was founded.

The Charter of the United Nations provides the basic criteria and mechanisms for responding to threats to international peace and security. As a last resort, the international community may employ coercive measures, including the use of military force, but this can be done only in strict conformity with the Charter and pursuant to a decision by the Security Council. We believe that enforcement actions without Security Council authorization and in contempt of the Charter tend to

undermine the current international security system. The experience of Kosovo — where the Council failed to agree on the necessary course of action and stood by watching the unsanctioned action by a regional organization — was detrimental to very basic principles of international relations, and the international community should strive to prevent a recurrence.

On the basis of this perspective, we note the readiness of the Security Council to consider, within the parameters of the Charter and given its own obligations, situations in which civilians are targeted or in which access to humanitarian assistance is deliberately impeded. Yet we must keep in mind that the Council must perform its tasks within the framework of its Charter obligations; that is to say, it must intervene in cases where international peace and security are threatened.

In this connection, I would like to reaffirm the need to rid ourselves of double standards in upholding international humanitarian law. The international community must give equal attention to all conflict situations that lead to loss of life or humanitarian catastrophes, regardless of where they take place or the political considerations of one country or another. It is disturbing that the Security Council has at times been too slow in responding to the conflicts in Africa and some other areas and too inadequate in committing itself in terms of the measures and resources it has authorized to address these problems. The threat of allowing financial considerations to influence decision-making on whether and how to respond to clear threats to international peace and security is a matter of great and growing concern. Such a practice can weaken the Council's authority and that of the Secretary-General in the planning and implementation of peacekeeping operations. There is a general perception that a uniform standard for responding to the outbreak of conflicts in all parts of the world is lacking.

A more credible and representative Security Council will be better equipped to fulfil its tremendous responsibility. The Council should be more transparent, more democratic and more accountable to the broader membership. The current situation — in which developing countries do not have an adequate and appropriate level of representation on the body charged by United Nations Members with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security — should not be allowed to continue. In this context, more efforts are needed to streamline the decision-making process in the Council, so as to avoid the paralysis that often results from differences among the permanent members.

The President: I thank the representative of Islamic Republic of Iran for the kind words he addressed to me, my country and Ambassador Chowdhury.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. I intend to adjourn the meeting now. The next meeting of the Council to continue the consideration of the item on the agenda will take place immediately following the adjournment of the present meeting.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4110

Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4110th Meeting

Thursday, 9 March 2000, 5.45 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Azad	(Bangladesh)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Canada	Mr. Vámos-Goldman
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Malaysia	Mr. Mohammad Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Kasse
	Namibia	Mr. Liswaniso
	Netherlands	Mr. Scheffers
	Russian Federation	Mr. Victorov
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Rosenstock

Agenda

Maintaining peace and security: Humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council

00-33579 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 5.45 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintaining peace and security: Humanitarian aspects of issues before the Security Council

The President: The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the humanitarian aspects of issues before the Council.

"The Security Council recalls its primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, and reaffirms the purposes and principles of the Charter. The Council also reaffirms its commitment to the principles of the political independence, sovereign equality and territorial integrity of all States.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of the humanitarian dimension to the maintenance of international peace and security and to its consideration of humanitarian issues relating to the protection of all civilians and other non-combatants in situations of armed conflict. The Council recognizes that humanitarian crises can be both causes and consequences of conflicts and that they can affect the Council's efforts to prevent and end conflicts, and deal with other threats to international peace and security.

"The Security Council affirms that timely consideration of the following humanitarian issues contributes to the prevention of escalation of conflicts and to the maintenance of international peace and security: access for United Nations and associated personnel, other humanitarian personnel and humanitarian supplies to the war-affected civilians; humanitarian components in peace agreements and peacekeeping operations; coordination between the Council and the relevant United Nations organs and agencies and regional bodies; and resource constraints.

"The Security Council reaffirms its concern for the well-being and rights of war-affected civilians, and reiterates its call to all parties to a conflict to ensure safe and unimpeded access in accordance with international law by humanitarian personnel to such civilians. The Council recognizes that cooperation of all parties concerned is vital for effectiveness and safety in providing humanitarian assistance. In this regard, the Council reiterates its call for combatants to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of United Nations and associated personnel and humanitarian personnel. The Council stresses the importance of providing assistance to all those in need, with particular emphasis on women and children and other vulnerable groups affected by armed conflict, in accordance with the principle of impartiality.

"The Security Council notes that full and timely support for humanitarian components can be critical in ensuring and enhancing the sustainability of any peace agreement and post-conflict peace-building. It emphasizes the importance of inclusion of humanitarian elements in peace negotiations and agreements, including the issue of prisoners of war, detainees and missing persons and others protected by international humanitarian law. The Council invites the Secretary-General to encourage the early consideration of such humanitarian elements in peace negotiations sponsored or supported by the United Nations, as appropriate. In cases of peace negotiations sponsored or supported directly by Member States, the Council calls on Member States to draw, as appropriate, upon the capacity of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies as well as other relevant international humanitarian organizations and regional bodies.

"The Security Council also notes that in some instances the integration of humanitarian components into peacekeeping operations would contribute effectively to their carrying out their mandate. In this regard, the Council

notes the importance of adequate training for peacekeeping personnel in international humanitarian law and human rights and with regard to the special situations of women and children as well as vulnerable population groups. The Council notes with appreciation the inclusion of personnel to handle child protection issues in some recent peacekeeping operations and encourages the inclusion of such personnel in future operations, particularly in the context of demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers and where there are large numbers of displaced and other war-affected children. The Council welcomes and encourages efforts by the United Nations to sensitize peacekeeping personnel in the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases.

"The Security Council underlines the importance of effective coordination among relevant United Nations organs and agencies, regional bodies, other intergovernmental and international organizations and other humanitarian actors in the field in situations of ongoing conflict and peace-building through, *inter alia*, the development of strategic frameworks, and expresses its willingness to consider ways to improve such coordination. In this regard, the Council notes the need for further improvement of communication, information flows and coordination between the peacekeeping, humanitarian and development aspects of United Nations action.

"The Security Council recognizes the role played by international humanitarian organizations and non-governmental organizations in providing humanitarian assistance and alleviating the impact of humanitarian crises, and further recognizes the specific mandate of the International Committee of the Red Cross in this regard. It emphasizes the importance for these organizations to uphold the principles of neutrality, impartiality and humanity in their humanitarian activities.

"The Security Council notes with concern that inadequate financial support can undermine efforts to address human suffering in certain contexts. The Council recognizes the need for appropriate financial support for humanitarian activities, and calls for adequate funding of humanitarian activities, bilateral or otherwise, in particular in support of multilateral efforts. The Council notes the importance of early engagement and disbursal of funds from the international financial institutions. The Council also notes with satisfaction that its previous statements calling for full support to the United Nations Consolidated Appeals have had a positive impact, and expresses its willingness to continue to encourage a generous response to such appeals.

"The Security Council encourages the Secretary-General to continue to include the humanitarian situation in his regular briefing to the Council on countries under review, including on the funding status of the United Nations Consolidated Appeals, where appropriate. It further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that his regular country reports continue to include a substantive, analytical section on humanitarian issues and their impact on international efforts to implement United Nations mandated activities.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2000/7.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4111

Security Council
Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4111th Meeting
Monday, 13 March 2000, 12.15 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

Third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (S/2000/186)

0033937 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 12.15 p.m.

Expression of sympathy to the Government and people of Ukraine

The President: At the outset of the meeting, I should like, on behalf of the Security Council, to express deep sympathy to the Government and people of Ukraine for the great loss of life suffered as a result of the recent mining catastrophe in the Barakov mine in the eastern part of Ukraine. I would request the representative of Ukraine to convey to his Government and to the bereaved families our deep condolences.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): On behalf of my Government, I would like to express my sincere thanks to you, Mr. President, and through you to all members of the Security Council, for the condolences just expressed in connection with the tragic accident at the coal mine in the eastern part of Ukraine.

As a result of the gas explosion in the coal mine, more than 80 workers were killed. Our Government has set up a special commission to investigate the tragic accident, which is the biggest of its kind in the history of my country.

I will immediately convey your condolences, which are a source of great moral support, to my Government and to the families of the deceased.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

Third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (S/2000/186)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Sierra Leone in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), document S/2000/186.

At this meeting the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, after which members of the Council may ask questions and make comments.

I give the floor to Mr. Annabi.

Mr. Annabi: Members of the Council have before them the third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), which was issued on 7 March. This report covers developments since the last report, which was issued on 11 January 2000 (S/2000/13).

During the reporting period there has been some progress in furthering the peace process in Sierra Leone, but in many areas the process has remained slow. There has been in particular little progress in disarmament in the northern and eastern parts of the country, while rebel groups continued to interfere with humanitarian activities and with UNAMSIL patrols and to harass the civilian population in those areas.

A special meeting was organized on 1 and 2 March 2000 under the auspices of the current Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Bamako, which was attended by high-level representatives of ECOWAS, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Sierra Leonean parties. The special meeting concluded with the adoption of a communiqué which calls on all Sierra Leonean leaders to translate their expressions of commitment to the peace process into concrete action.

In a significant development since the issuance of the report, a high-level meeting was convened on 9 March, last week, to follow up on the Bamako meeting with the participation of President Kabbah, Mr. Sankoh, Mr. Koroma and Chief Hinga Norman, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Adeniji, the UNAMSIL Force Commander and the Force Commander of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group, ECOMOG. At that meeting the following decisions were reached and subsequently made public. There would be full and unhindered access to all parts of the country for UNAMSIL, humanitarian agencies and all civilians, including refugees and internally displaced persons. There would no longer be areas under control of any combatant group and the Government would have full control over every part of the country. Finally, disarmament would take place in selected areas in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, where facilities are in place, and thereafter in other areas as facilities become available. The next day, on 10 March, the Special Representative convened a follow-up meeting with representatives of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), the Government, UNAMSIL and ECOMOG, and at that meeting it was decided that factions would remove all their checkpoints within 48 hours.

During the period covered by the report there were several serious incidents involving UNAMSIL and former rebel elements or combatants, although in the case of the main incident, involving the Guinean troops, they were not at that point in time under UNAMSIL command; they had not yet joined UNAMSIL. In the course of these incidents, peacekeeping troops were forced to surrender their weapons to groups of armed rebels. Measures have since been taken at the request of the Secretary-General to prevent such incidents from happening in the future and to try to retrieve these weapons. While some of the weapons have been returned, the bulk of the weapons seized from the Guinean troops have yet to be returned by the RUF.

On 23 February 2000, a convoy of the Indian battalion moving from Kenema to Daru was also stopped by a large number of well-armed RUF fighters. A stand-off ensued and continued for two days, but eventually the UNAMSIL convoy had to redeploy to Kenema. On 7 March, however, another convoy of the Indian battalion was able to reach Daru without being obstructed by the RUF.

UNAMSIL is now deployed, apart from Freetown, in Lungi, Port Loko, Lunsar, Masiaka, Makeni, Magburaka, Kenema, Daru and Mile 91, as well as at Bo and Moyamba. Successive efforts have been made to also deploy troops to Koidu and Kailahun on the eastern tip of the country, but most of these efforts were unsuccessful as a result of the RUF's refusal to allow UNAMSIL freedom of movement. On 10 March, however, a UNAMSIL convoy of 65 troops was able to reach Kailahun and Buedu on a recce mission. At the same time, according to oral reports received today from UNAMSIL, the envisaged deployment of a part of the Indian contingent today to Kailahun was again stopped by the RUF. In addition, no troops have yet been able to reach Koidu, although patrols of UNAMSIL military observers have visited the town on four occasions.

In a letter dated 13 January 2000 addressed to the Secretary-General, the Foreign Minister of Nigeria offered to suspend, for 90 days, the withdrawal of the Nigerian troops serving under ECOMOG in Sierra Leone. He made that offer in order to assist in preventing a possible security vacuum before the full deployment of the expanded UNAMSIL. In subsequent decisions with the Nigerian military authorities, it was agreed that two Nigerian infantry battalions and one tank company would be incorporated into UNAMSIL. I wish to express our gratitude to the Government of Nigeria for its cooperation and for the flexibility it has shown to help maintain the needed level of security in the country until the full deployment of UNAMSIL.

The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme has continued, but albeit at a slow pace. At the same time, a significant increase in disarmament of former Civil Defence Forces (CDF) combatants occurred during this reporting period. As of today, a total of 18,332 ex-combatants have been disarmed and demobilized. However, we are concerned about the number and the low quality of the weapons which have been surrendered, as well as about the ratio of collected arms to the number of ex-combatants, as many fighters report for demobilization only with

ammunition and hand grenades. As of today, a total of 6,426 weapons have been recovered, as well as 1,545 grenades and over 1.5 million rounds of ammunition.

The security situation at the disarmament and demobilization camps also continues to be a matter of concern, especially at Port Loko. UNAMSIL has recently begun to destroy the ammunition and unexploded mortar rounds collected in the course of this exercise.

Turning to the human rights situation, I want to recall that the human rights situation in Sierra Leone was extensively discussed at the Security Council consultations of 8 March. Therefore I will not go into details today.

I would, however, like to state once again that the human rights situation in Sierra Leone remains a cause for serious concern, in particular in the area of Port Loko, where former elements of the Sierra Leone Army are present, and in RUF-held areas, with continuing incidents of abductions, rape and harassment of civilians. However, according to our human rights observers, there has been some improvement in the human rights situation in areas where UNAMSIL has been able to deploy.

At the present time, the activities of the Sierra Leonean police continue to be limited to the western part of the country, in particular Freetown. Also, the local police still lack the necessary personnel, facilities and equipment to fulfil essential tasks. Despite these challenges, progress has been made in the training of police officers, improving service conditions, monitoring their conduct and implementing structural and personnel changes, which are being conducted under the leadership of the Sierra Leonean Inspector General of Police with the support of the Commonwealth Police Task Force and UNAMSIL's civilian police advisers.

On the humanitarian side, with the deployment of UNAMSIL military units, humanitarian access is showing signs of improvement. Urgent action continues to be needed to address the appalling conditions of health, water, sanitation and school facilities in most of the assessed areas. Meanwhile, RUF resistance to UNAMSIL deployment continues to slow humanitarian access to approximately 2.6 million war-affected Sierra Leoneans in the upper Northern and Eastern provinces of the country. Only limited humanitarian assistance has been possible in the critical locations of Kambia in the Northern Province and in Kailahun and Kono in the Eastern Province. Should humanitarian access improve, the United Nations agencies would require additional generous support from the international donor community.

I also wish to inform Council members of two incidents that took place on 7 March, in which humanitarian workers were detained and mistreated by RUF fighters near Kabala and Rogberi, respectively. All of these aid workers have been released, although one was shot in the hand. As a result, the non-governmental organizations concerned — Médecins sans Frontières and Christian Extension Services — have suspended their operations in RUF-held areas.

The Secretary-General's report outlines the main steps to be taken in the peace process so as to establish priorities and responsibilities for all concerned and to provide the international community with benchmarks to measure progress. These main steps can be grouped under four specific areas of activity: first, the early disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of all ex-combatants; secondly, the extension of state authority, including law enforcement, throughout the country; thirdly, national reconciliation and democratization; and fourthly, the improvement of Sierra Leone's own capacity to ensure its own security. Significant progress during the course of this year towards these important objectives would be an essential precondition for the organization and conduct of the parliamentary and presidential elections envisaged for the spring of 2001.

It is clear that progress towards these objectives would require a sustained commitment by all concerned, as well as significant material and financial resources. In this regard, the Secretary-General very much welcomes the organization of the donor conference scheduled to be held in London on 27 March at the initiative of the British Government, and he has asked Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette to represent the United Nations on that occasion to underscore the importance that he attaches to this meeting.

The Secretary-General would like on this occasion to appeal to the donor community to make generous contributions, in particular to the World Bank Multi-donor Trust Fund, to cover the present shortfall of approximately $20 million in the funding of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. It would also be useful if financial support could be provided for various other aspects of the peace process, including small-scale quick-impact projects, civil affairs, the rehabilitation of the civilian police, support for political parties — including the transformation of the

RUF into a political party — and other democratization efforts through the United Nations Sierra Leone Trust Fund, as proposed in the report.

The Secretary-General's report stresses, however, that resources alone will not be not sufficient. In the final analysis, the Government of Sierra Leone, the RUF and other groups and all Sierra Leonean leaders bear a personal responsibility for moving the process forward and they should intensify their efforts to this end. In this regard, the frequently negative approach taken by Mr. Sankoh towards key elements of the peace process and the role entrusted to the United Nations remains a cause for concern. Hostile public remarks by the RUF leader about UNAMSIL and its mandate have led to increasing tension between RUF fighters and UNAMSIL troops on the ground. They also give rise to serious doubts about the commitment of Mr. Sankoh and the RUF to the faithful implementation of the Lomé Agreement. Mr. Sankoh should therefore dispel these doubts in a tangible and unequivocal manner. His participation in the high-level meeting held on 9 March is a step in the right direction, but more needs to be done.

The continued ceasefire violations perpetrated against civilians and peacekeepers is not acceptable. The persistent obstruction of UNAMSIL patrols and deployments is also unacceptable and must cease immediately. However, UNAMSIL has made impressive progress, in the face of what are considerable difficulties, to deploy to many locations in Sierra Leone, as I have indicated, including to areas where no deployment had previously taken place.

The efforts of regional leaders, in particular President Konaré of Mali, the current Chairman of ECOWAS, to help keep the peace process on track are very much appreciated and the United Nations hopes that these very helpful and constructive efforts will continue in the future.

In conclusion, I would like to appeal to Council members to, perhaps, agree to a modification of the reporting cycle on UNAMSIL. Reports have so far been submitted every 45 days; we believe that the Council may wish to consider modifying that reporting cycle to a report every 60 days, if that is agreeable to Council members.

The President: I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom warmly welcomes the Secretary-General's first report under Security Council resolution 1289 (2000), not least for its clear indication of the problem areas in implementing that resolution and of the priority areas now for United Nations action.

We are also very grateful for the briefing that Mr. Annabi has just given us, which brings us up to date on a number of important aspects. I can say straight away that the United Kingdom has no objection if he extends the reporting period to 60 days. We understand the pressures which the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is under at the moment.

My visit to Sierra Leone from 8 to 10 March, which coincided with that of the United Kingdom Secretary of State for International Development, Ms. Clare Short, bears out the main conclusions in the Secretary-General's analysis.

The first thing to strike a visitor — and I travelled outside Freetown to the township of Masiaka and to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) camps at Port Loko — is the overwhelming desire of the great majority of Sierra Leoneans for peace and a normal life. There is, for instance, no religious animosity among the communities of Sierra Leone. I think that Muslims and Christians live together in Sierra Leone in harmony as great as anywhere in Africa. I would guess that even a majority of rank-and-file former combatants are eager to disarm and rebuild their civilian lives. But the DDR process, having so far attracted over 18,000 participants, is now slowing to a trickle because combatants are not getting orders to come in.

Mr. Annabi also referred to the quality of weapons that are being handed over. I watched a number of Revolutionary United Front (RUF) members hand over what looked like relics from the First World War in applying for their $300 for the DDR process. Clearly, the good weapons, however obtained, are being hidden in the bush.

The onus is therefore on the political leaders to respond to this tangible desire for peace. President Kabbah has already shown that he is prepared to make important compromises to ensure an end to conflict. I made the point to him that he must also know how and when not to compromise, when to be tough for the people's sake. I think he took that point. I did not get the same sense of commitment to peace from the other main factional leaders, least of all, perhaps, from Foday Sankoh. The Secretary-General is absolutely right in his report to be pointing the finger at Sankoh and the RUF as the main impediments to the deployment of the United

Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and to further progress in general in the implementation of the peace process. Secretary of State Short asked him repeatedly to speed up the RUF's response to DDR and to stop blocking UNAMSIL's deployment. Sankoh only bristled in reply, claiming that the RUF were doing no such thing, that he had never authorized killing as a policy, that the RUF had not deprived the Guineans of their weapons and that he had never sold a single diamond to pay for arms. There is, of course, independent evidence that the RUF has done all of these things. The Council's authority, in support of the Lomé Peace Agreement, is being thwarted here in that respect, just as it has been over the travel ban. Insisting on the proper implementation of Council decisions is an important source of pressure on the parties. It is also essential if there is to be a lasting improvement in the appalling humanitarian and human rights situation in the country.

I am glad that the Secretary-General has identified as a priority the rebuilding of new, democratically accountable Sierra Leone armed forces and police. The United Kingdom is contributing personnel and resources to these activities, both of which — army and police — are crucial not only for filling the security vacuum in the country but also for allowing UNAMSIL to do its job and then depart. The United Nations could otherwise be there for a very long time. I am pleased that President Kabbah made it quite clear to us during our visit last week that clear and transparent selection procedures will be established for entry into the army and the police and that any Sierra Leonean, from whatever faction, will be eligible if he has the right qualities.

Elections are going to be a vital part of the implementation process. In a country where State authority extends to less than half of its territory, organizing elections will be a complicated business and, no doubt, a costly one for the international community. But we have to make the constitutional timetable stick if we can — presidential elections by the end of February next year and parliamentary elections three months after that. Elections are just as much an opportunity for the RUF as for other parties, and they must contribute to making Sierra Leone proceed on the Mozambique, rather than the Angola, model. The Council can guess whom I place in the role of a potential Savimbi if it goes wrong in the Sierra Leone context.

The Security Council should be aware that UNAMSIL has got off to quite a difficult — perhaps not fully successful — start. That is no criticism at all of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Adeniji, Force Commander Jetley or other senior United Nations figures there, who are working commendably hard, in the most difficult circumstances, to produce results, and are taking tough action where they can. But the people of Sierra Leone have somehow come to believe that the United Nations was responsible for removing the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) — which, with some justification, they trusted to protect them — only to replace it with what seems to them to be poorly equipped and not-so-well motivated United Nations contingents with a different mandate. The loss of the Guinean contingent's weapons, of course, added to this perception.

I went to some trouble on my visit to explain publicly that ECOMOG made its own decision to stop operating, that UNAMSIL is the neutral peacekeeping force called for by all the signatories to the Lomé Peace Agreement and that it is perfectly capable of doing its job if the signatories do theirs. But the Council must monitor this aspect carefully, and insist with the Secretariat that UNAMSIL is brought up to full strength quickly, in quality as well as in quantity. I encouraged Special Representative Adeniji, as part of his important functions, to conduct and inspire a nationwide public information campaign, to bring home to Sierra Leoneans what an important asset UNAMSIL is for them and to seek their cooperation.

Then there is the question of resources. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is currently seen as the litmus test of the work of the United Nations in Africa, and the United Kingdom agrees with that. But Sierra Leone, too, is a crucial test. Our Sierra Leone peacekeeping effort, currently the largest United Nations peacekeeping effort worldwide, preceded that in the Democratic Republic of the Congo chronologically and is likely to set a pattern for those that follow. Donor support is therefore absolutely vital. The high-level donors' meeting which the United Kingdom is organizing in London on 27 March will be convened by the Secretary of State for International Development and attended by President Kabbah and, I hope, the Deputy Secretary-General. Its purpose will be to further energize political and financial support for the peace process and to identify the priorities for international funding over the coming period. Urgent assistance is needed if the ground is to be laid for free and fair elections next year and for the eventual departure of

UNAMSIL. I hope that Security Council partners who are able to do so will show the lead on this.

The holding of this open briefing is itself a signal of the Council's concern for the fragile situation in Sierra Leone and of our determination to see the Lomé Agreement implemented. But I think that, since the press is not present at this meeting, a statement directly to the media by you, Mr. President, after the meeting, would add to the impact. When I saw him early on 9 March, President Kabbah had in his hand the text of the statement you made on 8 March after the debate on the humanitarian situation in that country, and he was encouraged by it. I think that you should make it clear, Sir, if Council colleagues agree, that Council members endorse the conclusions of the Secretary-General's report; that they place great weight on the early implementation of all aspects of the Lomé Peace Agreement and commend the efforts of Special Representative Adeniji and of UNAMSIL to this end; that they are disappointed by the slow progress being made in the DDR process in particular; and that they call upon all signatories to the Lomé Agreement, and in particular upon Chairman Sankoh and the RUF, to reaffirm and demonstrate a concrete commitment to the Lomé peace process by allowing the extension of State authority throughout Sierra Leone, in full cooperation with UNAMSIL and with the United Nations team as whole, and by instructing the RUF membership to disarm and to surrender all weapons, including their heavy weapons, their mines and their anti-aircraft equipment.

I commend your decision, Mr. President, to hold this open meeting as a sign of the Security Council's concern for Sierra Leone, and I hope that the conclusions we come to this morning will support and strengthen the efforts of those on the ground who are working for a lasting peace.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom in particular for articulating the points that can be shared with the media following our meeting today.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening in this formal Chamber, for the information of the larger membership of the Organization, today's consideration of the third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). This report — which comes one month after the adoption of resolution 1289 (2000), which authorized the expansion of UNAMSIL, making it the largest current United Nations mission — is particularly important in the light of the disturbing reports that continue to filter out of Sierra Leone.

We also thank the Secretary-General for his report and, of course, Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for the update. My delegation is also agreeable to the modification in the reporting cycle that has been proposed by Mr. Annabi, as long as there is regularity in the reporting to the Council. We are also grateful to Ambassador Greenstock, the representative of the United Kingdom, for his own very insightful briefing on the situation in Sierra Leone, based on his recent visit to that country, and also for the very pertinent remarks he has just made.

The Secretary-General's report highlights the developments and shortcomings thus far in the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement. We share the concerns expressed therein regarding, among other things, the slow pace of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, given that only 17,191 ex-combatants have been registered as of 1 March 2000.

The hostile and conflicting public statements that Mr. Foday Sankoh has made against UNAMSIL are indeed regrettable. These and subsequent obstructions placed in the way of the forces deployed to several rebel-held areas serve only to further diminish confidence and raise questions as to Mr. Sankoh's commitment to the peace process. More disturbing is the continued deterioration of the human rights situation in the country, where looting, the burning of houses, harassment and abduction of civilians, rape and sexual abuse continue unabated in rebel-held areas. We cannot but underline that such acts are unacceptable and should cease immediately. The parties to these acts should be told, and told bluntly, that there is no amnesty for crimes committed after the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement.

While noting the general improvements in the human rights situation in areas where UNAMSIL is deployed, the report states clearly that elsewhere in the country the situation remains tense and volatile. It is therefore particularly important that the number of military personnel be quickly brought up to the authorized strength of 11,100.

Further, in the light of the continued attacks on civilians, as well as the refusal by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to cooperate with UNAMSIL, as evidenced by the blocking of main roads and the seizure of weapons by well-armed RUF fighters, it is imperative that UNAMSIL begin responding in a more assertive manner, in accordance with the robust rules of

engagement provided for under the limited Chapter VII mandate the Mission has been granted. We express full support for Mr. Adeniji to continue to take a firm line with former rebel leaders regarding the continuing human rights abuses and non-compliance with the Peace Agreement.

Malaysia appreciates the forthcoming views expressed by the Secretary-General in his report, including those contained in paragraphs 41 to 56, which highlight what still needs to be done in order not to lose the momentum of the peace process. We concur with him on the need for the early disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of all ex-combatants; the extension of State authority, including law enforcement, throughout the country; national reconciliation and democratization; and the improvement of Sierra Leone's capacity to ensure its own security through the restructuring of its own professional armed forces.

All these factors are pertinent to the successful outcome of the peace process. We call on the parties to honour their solemn pledges and on the international community to continue to assist the Government of Sierra Leone through the provision of much-needed material and financial resources.

In this regard, my delegation notes the shortfall in funding that the Secretary-General has referred to in his report and his appeal for contributions during the upcoming donor conference in London. We express our appreciation to those countries that have contributed generously. In particular, the United Kingdom and the United States of America are among those that have made substantial contributions.

Finally, my delegation will support the proposed statement to the media that has been suggested by Ambassador Greenstock and on the basis of the elements that he has outlined.

Mr. Hamer (Netherlands): I would like to thank Mr. Annabi for his briefing and his introduction of the Secretary-General's report. Like Ambassadors Greenstock and Hasmy before me, let me say that my delegation would be happy to comply with Mr. Annabi's plea for an extension of the reporting period.

The report before us points to some positive developments, but essentially the news is bad. As the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) is in the process of deploying — very courageously, I might add — its units have been the targets of rebel attacks and intimidation. There are widespread, major human rights violations, and they are so bad that these violations prompted a strongly worded statement to the press by the Council's President only last week.

This situation is unacceptable, and the main responsibility for it lies quite clearly with Mr. Sankoh and the lack of commitment on the part of Mr. Sankoh and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). This is the theme, the red line running throughout the Secretary-General's report. The process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is proceeding slowly, and while any progress in this area is of course good news, here again the programme is in trouble because of a lack of commitment on the part of the RUF.

While the international community is devising new ways of addressing the needs of a country emerging from conflict, Mr. Sankoh pockets what is offered him under the terms of the peace accord. He sits in the Government and has himself appointed head of the Commission that is supposed to curb the sale of illegally mined diamonds from Sierra Leone, all the while himself dragging his feet when it comes to fulfilling his part of the deal. And worse, Mr. Sankoh is not just trying to obstruct the Peace Agreement, he is in fact trying to intimidate the international community.

While there is much that could and should be said regarding the steps ahead outlined by the Secretary-General at the end of his report, their success is predicated on the international community's success in forcing Mr. Sankoh and his supporters to abide by the Peace Agreement. Without the RUF's cooperation, there just will not be the measure of security and stability needed for faster and further progress.

The Security Council has been unequivocal that it will not put up with Mr. Savimbi any longer. The time has come now to show that the Security Council's patience with Mr. Sankoh is running out.

As part of our effort to ensure a strong and credible UNAMSIL presence, we should spare no effort to ensure the full deployment of UNAMSIL, with access to all parts of Sierra Leone, and firm UNAMSIL action in accordance with its robust rules of engagement.

While UNAMSIL is not fully deployed, the continued presence of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) is needed to maintain the fragile stability and prevent a security vacuum. We applaud the Nigerian

offer to suspend the withdrawal of Nigerian ECOMOG troops remaining in Sierra Leone.

A warm tribute is due also to President Konaré, whose commitment to regional stability is well known from his leadership in fostering the ECOWAS small arms moratorium and whose energetic current leadership of ECOWAS is contributing greatly to the international community's peace efforts in Sierra Leone.

Finally, I should like to ask two questions of Mr. Annabi. Paragraph 48 of the report states that viable mechanisms should be created to allow the Government and the people of Sierra Leone to reap the benefits of the exploitation of the country's strategic resources. Does this not imply that the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development, which is chaired by Mr. Sankoh, is not in itself such a viable mechanism as intended in paragraph 48?

Finally, I would be grateful if Mr. Annabi could shed some light on the projects that will be developed as part of the community rehabilitation and reintegration programme referred to in paragraph 26 of the Secretary-General's report.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): I would like to join previous speakers in commending the Secretary-General's report and the update given by Mr. Annabi, which have provided us with a clear and objective view of the situation in the areas of responsibility of the expanded United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). The analysis presents a broad panorama of both successes and failures on the road to peace in Sierra Leone. We are also thankful to Ambassador Greenstock for the very important firsthand information he has provided us.

There has been encouraging progress in the establishment and functioning of several implementation organs under the terms of the Lomé Agreement. We welcome the measures taken to this end by the parties concerned, and we call upon them to demonstrate their readiness to continue constructive and forward-looking dialogue, bearing in mind that the prospects for stability in the country will depend on their firm determination and political will.

While some progress has been made, the peace process in Sierra Leone continues to face serious challenges. The security situation, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report, remains tense and precarious. The reports of obstruction of the peacekeeping operation — including arms seizures, refusal to allow UNAMSIL to deploy, detainment of peacekeepers and exchange of fire — give rise to the gravest concerns.

The lack of compliance with the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme constitutes yet another serious source of concern. It is imperative that all aspects of the DDR mechanism be implemented in an effective and timely manner through the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, with the assistance of UNAMSIL.

The humanitarian and human security challenges in Sierra Leone were addressed previously by the members of the Security Council, and the Council issued a strong and uncompromising response. We reiterate our firm judgment that those responsible for atrocities should be held accountable for their actions as soon as possible.

We fully associate ourselves with the point made by the Secretary-General in his report that the main task for the United Nations in Sierra Leone remains the establishment of a credible peacekeeping presence in the country, with the aim of ensuring the security conditions for the advancement of the peace process. We commend the tireless efforts of the United Nations peacekeeping personnel in Sierra Leone, and in particular of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, in performing their crucial tasks, and we call upon the Sierra Leonean parties to maintain a cooperative and credible association with UNAMSIL.

The signing of the Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and rebel forces in July 1999 had seemed to infuse new life into the prospects for a lasting settlement of the brutal eight-year civil war in that country. With the establishment and eventual expansion of the United Nations peacekeeping Mission in Sierra Leone, the international community demonstrated its commitment to ensuring that these hopes would not founder.

We must make clear to the leaders of the Sierra Leonean parties that we expect concrete and urgent action confirming their non-confrontational and constructive approach to the implementation of the Peace Agreement. We must call upon them to honour the agreed promises which have been made, above all to their own people.

In conclusion, we fully support the proposal by the United Kingdom to issue a statement to the press in this regard.

Mr. Chen Xu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for his report and Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for the additional briefing he has just given. We would also like to commend you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Bangladesh for convening this open briefing.

Although the situation in Sierra Leone has been generally stable recently, many elements of instability still remain in the country. The Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFP), in particular the actions of Mr. Sankoh and its failure to cooperate with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), has become the major roadblock to the peace process. We are deeply concerned at the slow pace of progress in the process of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of the ex-combatants. We are also deeply disturbed by the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone, which remains serious, and by the human rights violations which continue to occur.

We concur with the Secretary-General's analysis, in part VII of his report, of the four main steps in the peace process. In this regard, we would like to emphasize our view that the RUFP must unconditionally implement the obligations undertaken under the Lomé Agreement and cease its opposition to and confrontation with the Government and UNAMSIL. It should be actively involved in the DDR process and cooperate with UNAMSIL in gaining access to the eastern and northern part of the country, and it should put an end to looting, kidnapping and other forms of human rights violations. We urge Mr. Sankoh to keep his promise on this issue.

Secondly, the international community should continue to support the peace process in Sierra Leone in various ways. We appreciate the positive efforts and the results achieved by Mali, the current Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States. We thank in particular Nigeria and other troop contributors to UNAMSIL, and we welcome the donor conference to be held later this month in London. We also hope that the parties concerned will continue to provide assistance in response to the United Nations consolidated inter-agency appeal for Sierra Leone, with a view to alleviating the humanitarian situation in that country.

Thirdly, we commend the Secretariat for its high degree of efficiency in deploying UNAMSIL. We also hope that UNAMSIL will continue, within the mandate given it by the Security Council, to fulfil its unique and important role in the peace process in Sierra Leone.

Finally, we are in agreement with the proposal to extend the interval between reports of the Secretary-General from 45 to 60 days.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): I, too, wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this meeting to give us the opportunity to hear Mr. Annabi. We wish to thank him for his update and for introducing the Secretary-General's report of 7 March on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), which covers recent political developments, the security situation, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, human rights and humanitarian affairs.

We also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Greenstock, for having shared with the Council his observations from his recent visit to Sierra Leone.

Ambassador Greenstock's observations and Mr. Annabi's briefing clearly indicate that there exists a strong desire for peace on the part of the majority of the people of Sierra Leone. This makes the continuation of atrocities and abuses of human rights even more intolerable. Indeed, only last week the Council highlighted this in its statement to the press. It is clear that those atrocities must cease if Sierra Leone is to rebuild the social fabric it needs to ensure an effective State structure and a bright future for its population.

My delegation notes with concern that there has been little progress in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. We remain concerned that the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) commanders in the east of the country continue to prevent RUF and ex-army combatants from joining the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. We wish to emphasize that the low quality of surrendered weapons and the ratio of collected weapons to the number of ex-combatants — to which Mr. Annabi has referred — is another source of concern to my delegation.

We welcome the joint cooperation of UNAMSIL and the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration in developing a programme for the disposal of arms and ammunition. We hope that it will be implemented as soon as possible.

Mr. Annabi's briefing on the report of the Secretary-General noted several positive developments, which include the establishment of the Commission for

the Consolidation of Peace and the setting up of the National Electoral Commission. We look forward to continued progress in the development of a strategic framework approach for Sierra Leone and a military integration plan. But we would like to ask Mr. Annabi whether there have been any developments in the hearings for the commissioners for the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development.

We have been heartened to note the sterling contribution of UNAMSIL. In this regard, we wish to commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the civilian and military components of UNAMSIL.

We have fully supported the expansion of UNAMSIL forces in Sierra Leone, which has included the incorporation of human rights training and monitoring, police training and the protection of women, children and other civilians. We believe the appointment of a senior child human rights monitor is a step in the right direction, but we would encourage further measures to be put in place to address the critical problem of the protection of children.

We are also very concerned about the continuing reports about the humanitarian situation. We have noted that Mr. Annabi referred to the withdrawal from RUF-controlled areas of Sierra Leone by two noted non-governmental organizations, which had been the only source of humanitarian relief for many people in Sierra Leone. We strongly urge that the Security Council send a strong message to the forces in Sierra Leone, calling on them to cooperate with the humanitarian relief agencies.

It was also distressing to learn that despite UNAMSIL's best intentions, resistance continues, and that there is a lack of cooperation between the RUF and UNAMSIL. We support the call for a strong statement from the Council to RUF leaders, especially Mr. Foday Sankoh, to cooperate with UNAMSIL and to refrain from making statements that would inflame the present situation.

As far as the security situation is concerned, we have also noted, in paragraph 21 of the Secretary-General's report, that the willingness of police personnel to return to former duty stations in the provinces has been affected by the violence inflicted on officers and their families during the conflict. We would like to hear further from Mr. Annabi whether there has been any progress made in that regard.

My delegation is encouraged by the continued positive involvement of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). As we have heard, the recently concluded meetings held in Bamako under the auspices of ECOWAS have given us some hope that there will be some progress made in the further fulfilment of the Lomé Agreement. We wish to applaud the current leadership of ECOWAS on its initiative, and to encourage action aimed at putting further pressure on the parties involved to comply with the Lomé Agreement. We also wish to pay tribute to those troops that have made up the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), particularly to the Nigerian Government, which provided a smooth transition from ECOMOG to UNAMSIL.

We further endorse the recommendations of the Joint Implementation Committee aimed, *inter alia*, at accelerating the implementation of the Lomé Agreement regarding compliance with the disarmament process, the ceasefire agreement and unhindered humanitarian access.

We have further noted, in paragraph 9 of the report, that progress continues to be made towards developing the strategic framework approach for Sierra Leone, and that the United Nations country team has produced an initial report outlining principles and policies guiding United Nations actions and proposing appropriate institutional and coordination arrangements to ensure coherence among United Nations entities and partners. We wish to highlight this because it is important that once the security situation has been stabilized, attention be paid to Sierra Leone's economic and social development. In this regard, we wish to emphasize the importance of support for the upcoming international donor conference, to be held on 27 March under the auspices of the United Kingdom, because we believe that this will provide a useful forum through which tangible expressions of support can be derived.

However, a lingering question is, where do we go from here? Sierra Leone is a society in which women, children and civilians at large face a future of insecurity, terror and fear. We share the view that it is necessary to ensure a credible peacekeeping presence throughout Sierra Leone and to create a climate of confidence and security. We therefore concur with the four steps outlined by the Secretary-General in his report — the need for early disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants; the extension of State authority, including

law enforcement; the improvement of Sierra Leone's capacity to ensure its own security; and national reconciliation and democratization — because we agree that all of these have to be in place if the election timetable is to be fulfilled.

We believe these four pillars can effectively chart the course for the viability of Sierra Leone. All of this will hinge on the political will of the parties and the support that the international community is prepared to give. We therefore wish to support the proposal for the press statement to be issued by the President at the conclusion of our meeting and the elements outlined by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this important briefing. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report of 7 March and Mr. Annabi for his supplementary briefing and for the kind words that he, as well as the delegations of China and Jamaica, addressed to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its Chairman.

We have studied the Secretary-General's report and have listened attentively to Mr. Annabi's briefing. We share their appraisal of the situation and of the outlook in Sierra Leone. As indicated by the Secretary-General's report and Mr. Annabi's briefing, the situation in Sierra Leone is precarious, even though modest progress has been made in implementing the Lomé Agreement. In this regard, I would like to reaffirm the determination of the ECOWAS countries to support the efforts to consolidate the peace process.

I would also like to recall the outcome of the meeting of the Joint Implementation Committee, which took place at Bamako on 2 March. That meeting reaffirmed above all that the achievement of genuine and lasting peace in Sierra Leone remained fundamentally the responsibility of Sierra Leoneans themselves. The meeting particularly stressed the following points. First was the misinterpretation of the Lomé Agreement, particularly with regard to the creation and the mandate of a United Nations peacekeeping force. Secondly, the meeting stressed the slowness of the disarmament process, related to a large extent to the slow deployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the difficulties of access for humanitarian agencies throughout the country. Finally the meeting especially stressed the need for the re-establishment of government institutions, including judicial, police and revenue-collection institutions.

The Bamako meeting also decided upon the following urgent actions. First, the immediate lifting by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of the obstacles it has placed in the way of UNAMSIL's deployment. In this regard, we welcome the measures announced at the follow-up meeting of 9 March to which Ambassador Greenstock referred. Secondly, the meeting also called for the immediate return by the RUF of the large quantities of weapons and equipment seized from the Guinean troops and the immediate return by RUF and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) of the weapons taken from the Kenyan forces. The meeting also called for the simultaneous dismantling by all combatants of all roadblocks throughout the country before the next follow-up meeting, which is to be held in Freetown on 20 March 2000. It emphasized that no party has the right to reign over any part of the territory of Sierra Leone as if it were its private kingdom. The meeting also stressed the need to accelerate the establishment of additional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration centres once UNAMSIL is deployed.

Other questions considered at that meeting were related, among other things, to the restructuring of Sierra Leonean armed forces and the implementation of the political provisions of the Lomé Peace Agreement. It was agreed that efforts needed to be made to implement those provisions, on the understanding that the capacity of the Government of National Unity to implement such provisions will be facilitated by its power to mobilize additional financial resources.

Lastly, the meeting recommended that regular consultations should be scheduled between the Government, the Revolutionary United Front Party, the AFRC and all other parties.

In conclusion, my delegation endorses the observations and recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report of 7 March. We also take the view that political and financial support of the international community in the current stage of the Sierra Leone peace process are essential. My delegation fully supports the proposals to extend the reporting period and for a statement to be made to the press, as proposed by Ambassador Greenstock. We would also like to thank him for the very useful information provided at the beginning of this meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 1.25 p.m.

Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4111th Meeting

Monday, 13 March 2000, 3.25 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Canada	Mr. Vamos-Goldman
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

Third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (S/2000/186)

00-33995 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was resumed at 3.25 p.m.

Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi (Namibia): At the outset let me thank the Secretary-General for the report he has circulated to us and also thank Mr. Annabi for the remarks he made introducing this report. The report of the Secretary-General clearly indicates to us the progress that has been achieved since the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the problems that exist. It also provides us with proposals for how to move forward. We are very grateful for these. We also want to thank Ambassador Greenstock for the briefing he gave us.

The people of Sierra Leone have experienced unimaginable horrors. Only a process of reconciliation, accompanied by the demobilization of combatants and military integration, can help instil peace and security in Sierra Leone. We therefore thank those who are helping with this difficult process, and we welcome UNAMSIL's readiness to assist in this regard.

The security situation certainly worries our delegation. In this connection, it should be emphasized that it is very important to ensure that peacekeeping operations are always carried out under appropriate mandates and that the size and strength of the force is commensurate with the problem. We think that these two go together. It is one thing to have the appropriate mandate, but if the size does not conform, then this in itself presents a problem.

The fact that the areas with extensive UNAMSIL patrols are seeing improved security, in our view, speaks volumes. We understand from the report that the conflict had a major impact on institutions of law and order. In this regard, we appeal to the international community to assist Sierra Leone in the training of police as well as in providing essential facilities and equipment. The work of UNAMSIL and the Commonwealth Police Task Force in this field is highly commendable.

In all conflict situations, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process has proved to be the most difficult. Indeed, it depends not only on the commitment of the parties but also on the extent of support from the international community. The programme by UNAMSIL for the disposal of arms and ammunition, to be commenced soon, should therefore be assisted.

Similarly, we welcome the launching of the community rehabilitation and reintegration programme, and we thank the World Bank and the African Development Bank for their contribution to this programme. It is programmes such as this one which will serve as incentives for ex-combatants to surrender their weapons, despite the reluctance of their leaders.

The report clearly points out that the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process is being set back by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). We need to examine how UNAMSIL can maximize its progress in this area. Hence, and as the Secretary-General clearly proposes in his report, one of the main priorities for the United Nations in Sierra Leone remains the speedy establishment of a credible peacekeeping presence throughout the country to create the necessary climate of confidence and security conditions for the implementation of various aspects of the peace process. The report also points out, in a very clear manner, the impediments to the DDR programme, which need to be examined further.

Our delegation believes that we have a real chance to succeed here and so we must at all costs avoid repeating the experience we had in Angola with regard to the DDR of UNITA combatants. Here again we believe that some collective thinking needs to be exercised and past experience taken into account.

We note that the human rights situation is most disturbing in the RUF-held areas. We wish to underscore that the perpetrators of violence against civilians and aid workers are not covered by the amnesty under the Lomé Agreement, as mentioned in the report. Here again we commend UNAMSIL for its work in the area of human rights.

Furthermore, we concur with the steps proposed by the Secretary-General. Indeed, the early disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of all ex-combatants; the extension of State authority, including law enforcement, throughout the country; national reconciliation and democratization; and the improvement of Sierra Leone's capacity to ensure its own security is what is needed to restore peace and stability to Sierra Leone.

With regard to national reconciliation and democratization, we support the steps proposed by the Secretary-General. We wish to underline that for national reconciliation and democratization to prosper in Sierra Leone, all parties, especially the RUF, should cooperate, and the international community should lend its assistance in this regard.

Namibia supports the proposed donor conference, scheduled for 27 March this year in London, and we call on all to contribute generously. We thank the United Kingdom Government for this initiative.

We commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Adeniji, the men and women of UNAMSIL, and the personnel of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) for their courageous work in Sierra Leone.

Finally, our thanks go to all those countries that contribute troops to UNAMSIL, and we also are in agreement with the proposal that you, Mr. President, speak to the press after this meeting.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I should like to begin by thanking Mr. Hedi Annabi for introducing the third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), which gives a comprehensive account of the situation prevailing in the country and identifies the challenges to be faced in order to complete the peace process successfully, as well as the steps to be taken in order to act effectively to meet those challenges.

My delegation supports Mr. Annabi's suggestion that the report henceforth be published every 60 days.

In this regard, my delegation notes with satisfaction the progress that has been made in the political area in the implementation of the provisions relating to governance.

Here we would like to point out the need to speed up this process so as to establish and put into effective operation, as soon as possible, the National Electoral Commission and the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development.

However, we are bound to acknowledge that the situation in Sierra Leone, because of its continuing precariousness, is still profoundly disquieting, in particular with respect to the manifest reluctance of Mr. Sankoh to cooperate in implementing the Peace Agreement. Here we reaffirm Tunisia's commitment to the full and early implementation of the provisions of that Agreement, which offers a genuine chance for salvation to the people of Sierra Leone, who have already endured such hardship and who continue to be the victims of a tragedy of vast humanitarian, social, economic and political dimensions.

My delegation would like to express its profound concern at the failure by the rebels to respect their commitments, undertaken voluntarily in the framework of the Lomé Agreement. We feel that it is essential for them, and in particular for Mr. Sankoh and his party, to fulfil their responsibilities vis-à-vis their people and their country in good faith, especially since Mr. Sankoh now bears a post of responsibility of high importance in the Government.

In this regard, we deem it necessary for the Security Council to continue to exert pressure on the recalcitrant parties and to indicate, as firmly and forcefully as possible, its commitment to securing a return to peace, security and stability in the country, in accordance with the provisions of the Peace Agreement. This commitment is all the more pressing because the barriers placed in the way of humanitarian assistance and the obstacles impeding the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, as well as the obstructive manoeuvres to impede UNAMSIL's activities and attacks on personnel of the Mission, have become daily occurrences.

My delegation in this regard would like to underscore the pertinent nature of the steps suggested by the Secretary-General in part VII of his report, which are aimed at creating a climate of confidence and the necessary conditions for the implementation of the various aspects of the peace process. The proposals by the Secretary-General deserve our full support, and we should all do our utmost to see them put into effect.

The following steps seem to us to be most urgent in this regard: the rapid establishment of an effective peacekeeping force throughout the territory; the provision to peacekeeping troops of the necessary equipment to permit them to carry out their mandate properly and command the necessary credibility; strict respect for the rules of engagement by UNAMSIL troops; the speeding up of the deployment in the field of the police officers provided for in resolution 1289 (2000), and, as necessary, an increase in their personnel in the light of the needs perceived in this area; an increase in financial assistance to Sierra Leone; and, lastly, support by the Security Council for the efforts deployed by the President of Mali, Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, current Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States — efforts which attest to the importance that western Africa, and Africa in general, attaches to the situation in Sierra Leone.

My delegation believes that the question of development, including the right of the people of Sierra Leone to development, should be one of the priorities of the Sierra Leone peace process in view of the close link between development and lasting peace, as was stated so eloquently by the Secretary-General in his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of lasting peace and sustainable development in Africa.

In our opinion, focusing on development in Sierra Leone not only will contribute to the successful implementation of the demobilization and reintegration programme for former combatants, but will also help to resettle refugees and displaced persons in their country and to steel Sierra Leoneans against any temptation to rally behind the forces of destruction.

Since there is no need for further proof of the link between peace and development, particularly with regard to internal conflicts, it seems to us appropriate for the Security Council to envisage including a reference to this question in its resolutions and statements dealing with this type of conflict.

I also wish to thank the Ambassador of the United Kingdom for the first-hand information he gave us concerning his recent trip to the country. I endorse his suggestion regarding a statement to the press by the President of the Council.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, we would like to thank Mr. Annabi for the very comprehensive information he gave us in his introduction of the latest report of the Secretary-General.

We are also grateful for the first-hand information that Ambassador Greenstock shared with us. That information gave us an eloquent and precise picture of the overall situation in Sierra Leone.

We cannot conceal the fact that the content of the report of the Secretary-General is a source of concern to us. What emerges from it is a lack of commitment to the Lomé Agreement on the part of Foday Sankoh, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the rebel forces in general. That lack of commitment takes specific forms: first, continued attacks on the civilian population by the rebel forces; secondly, not only hostile rhetoric against the presence of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), but also serious acts of violence against its personnel and equipment; and thirdly, slowness in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, largely due to the rebels' lack of cooperation.

We wish to reaffirm categorically our absolute condemnation of violations of human rights carried out by the rebel forces. The amnesty agreed in the Lomé Agreement does not cover crimes committed since its signature. Moreover, crimes against humanity cannot be exempted because they are offences against the collective conscience of mankind.

Attacks against the personnel of UNAMSIL are unacceptable. We have been aware since the beginning that the personnel of UNAMSIL could face a hostile environment. In that context, we believe that Chapter VII of the Charter and the rules of engagement should be applied very rigorously. Otherwise, UNAMSIL will be prevented from fulfilling its mandate. We do not call for absolute security assurances, but neither do we believe that UNAMSIL personnel should be exposed to disproportionate risks. This could ultimately affect the viability of the Mission.

Given the situation described, the sanctions regime imposed by the Security Council should be applied firmly. In this regard, we agree with what is said by the Secretary-General at the end of paragraph 49 of his report concerning the possibility of considering measures to put an end to illegal diamond sales. In this connection, the exceptional work done by Ambassador Fowler in the context of the sanctions regime imposed on UNITA might serve as a valuable model.

Notwithstanding the difficulties that it indicates, the report of the Secretary-General also shows that the expansion of UNAMSIL has begun to have positive effects. The distribution of humanitarian assistance has improved within its area of deployment, as has the human rights situation. We hope that the deployment of the 11,000 members of UNAMSIL throughout the country, and particularly in those areas under rebel control, will have a significant stabilizing effect. We once again reiterate that for that deployment to be possible it is necessary for the very parties that in the Lomé Agreement called for the presence of UNAMSIL — and I refer to the rebels — comply fully with the commitments they undertook in July 1999 and that they guarantee the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel.

Finally, we wish to express our agreement with the priorities set out by the Secretary-General in part VII of

his report: rapid implementation of the disarmament process, the extension of State authority throughout the territory of Sierra Leone, the national reconciliation process and the creation of a professional army and police force. However, in order to achieve this there is a need for a clear commitment to peace on the part of all the parties, in particular the rebel forces.

In closing, I would like to raise two points. First, we agree with the request made by Mr. Annabi that the report of the Secretariat be presented every 60 days, instead of every 45. We know that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has too few personnel to carry out the tasks we have given it. We also know that it does remarkable work, for which we are very grateful.

Lastly, we approve the elements for a statement to the press proposed by Ambassador Greenstock.

Ms. Soderberg (United States of America): I want to thank Mr. Annabi not only for his briefing today but also for the amount of time and energy he and his staff have put into trying to give the United Nations operation in Sierra Leone the ability to carry out the mandate that the United Nations has given it. It is a very difficult Mission, and they certainly deserve our full support in their efforts. I think it is one of the most difficult missions out there today and one that deserves the full attention of the Council.

I appreciate the holding of this briefing today, and I think we should all commend Ambassador Greenstock for taking the time to go to Sierra Leone. There is nothing like seeing the situation on the ground. I think it is informative. I myself was there about six months ago. You cannot come back from a trip like that and not determine to do everything you can to try to help ameliorate the situation. I certainly share Ambassador Greenstock's view that the people of Sierra Leone are committed to achieving the peace that they so rightly deserve. I think it is incumbent on all of us to do what we can to give it to them.

I would underscore what others have said, and certainly the Secretary-General's report and Mr. Annabi's briefing. But I think it boils down to two real problems in Sierra Leone. One is the failure of Foday Sankoh to live up to his commitments in the peace process. From that failure stems a myriad of problems that we are dealing with. But until he begins to live up to the commitments that he has made, as well as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the mission given by the Security Council to UNAMSIL is not going to be fulfilled. I would certainly join the Secretary-General and others in calling on Foday Sankoh to abide by his commitments.

Looking at the Secretary-General's report, we see that he is very blunt about raising serious doubts about the commitment of Foday Sankoh to the faithful implementation of the peace accord. He is talking about the main obstacle to the extension of State authority being the continuing refusal of access by the RUF. I think it is important for us to be as blunt about this as possible, both in our private discussions with him as well as publicly. Along those lines, I would fully support the proposal for a press statement that Ambassador Greenstock put forward, which I think rightly includes a call for Foday Sankoh and the RUF to fulfil their commitments.

The second problem that we face there is the fact that the United Nations operation is not fully up and running. That is no one's fault in particular. It is just a long process. It takes several months for the United Nations to expand a mandate such as the one the Security Council gave it. I think we all need to do more within our own Governments, and in the region, to provide the resources so that they can get fully deployed. I think none of us want to see a repeat of the United Nations peacekeepers being disarmed by the RUF, as opposed to the other way around. I therefore commend the British Government for calling the donors' conference at the end of this month. I certainly hope that the Deputy Secretary-General will be in a position to go there. I think that until we have a full peacekeeping force on the ground there, it is going to be very difficult to have it carry out its mandate, much less overcome the continuing problems going on there.

I would also second something that others have said. I think we need to look at the travel restrictions on the RUF leaders. It is our strong view that such leaders should be able to travel only upon prior consent of the sanctions committee. The recent travel schedule of Mr. Foday Sankoh is one that surprised our delegation at least, and I think a number of other members of the delegations on the Security Council. I think we need to reiterate our commitment there, and I would perhaps underscore that in the press statement, if others would agree, in order to remind Member States that there are travel bans on some of these leaders.

Lastly, I will just underscore the situation on human rights in Sierra Leone, particularly with regard to women, girls and child soldiers. It is one of the more

horrific situations with respect to abuses of human rights, and I think we should remember that when we look at trying to contribute to the Trust Fund or help the United Nations mobilize. It is a very serious situation. As Ambassador Greenstock said, the world is focused on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but the real test of the moment is whether or not Sierra Leone is going to work. It is one that we all have a responsibility in helping the parties fulfil.

Mr. Vamos-Goldman (Canada): We would also like to thank Mr. Annabi for his detailed briefing, and like previous speakers, we also have no objections to the extension of the reporting period. I would also like to thank Ambassador Greenstock for sharing his impressions so frankly with us this morning.

The modest progress made in implementing the Lomé Agreement and in establishing various bodies to that end, notably the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, gives some encouragement.

We are particularly gratified that the security, humanitarian and human rights situation in Sierra Leone has improved most in the areas of deployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). This confirms that a robust troop commitment in support of a strong mandate is the best contribution the Council can make to individual security.

It is most important that troop-contributing countries provide their contingents with adequate equipment to use the full measure of their mandate and rules of engagement. This is particularly important in the context of sporadic acts of aggression and systematic interference by ex-rebel elements against United Nations and humanitarian personnel. We are concerned that, without an adequate resource base, UNAMSIL's ability to protect civilians may erode with future confrontations.

Canada remains concerned by persistent reports of human rights and humanitarian law violations, particularly those perpetrated by ex-Sierra Leone Army elements in the Port Loko area. All parties in Sierra Leone have an obligation to ensure the protection of civilians and the safe and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and should recall that the amnesty provisions of the Lomé Agreement do not apply to offences committed since its signature.

All parties must refrain from interfering with the free movement of people, goods and, particularly, UNAMSIL and humanitarian personnel through the use of illegal roadblocks. Canada is gravely concerned with reports that the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) has begun laying landmines near Bendu, presumably with a view to interfering with UNAMSIL deployment to the area. This would be a basic and grievous violation of the Lomé Agreement.

As expressed by the Council in its statement of 8 March, a tangible expression of commitment to the peace process is needed from the RUF and its leader, Foday Sankoh, in the light of the group's inadequate compliance with the provisions of the Lomé Agreement. Specifically, the RUF must disclose the number of combatants under its command, as other armed factions have done, and return equipment seized from the Guinean battalion of UNAMSIL during a 10 January ambush. For his part, Mr. Sankoh must respect the travel ban provisions of Security Council resolution 1171 (1998) and refrain from making hostile public statements against UNAMSIL which, to say the very least, undermine confidence in the peace process.

While the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme (DDR) is making gradual progress overall, the same cannot be said for the northern and eastern parts of Sierra Leone still under RUF control. RUF obstructionism has hindered humanitarian access to some 2.6 million war-affected Sierra Leoneans and has stymied the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees efforts to monitor and facilitate refugee returns. We urge all parties to participate fully in the DDR programme.

Finally, we agree with the elements of the statement to the press proposed by Ambassador Greenstock, including the element added by Ambassador Soderberg.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation)(*spoke in Russian*): We associate ourselves with the words of gratitude addressed to Mr. Annabi and Ambassador Greenstock. We note certain progress that has been made in the implementation of the Lomé Agreement and in the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) contingents in various regions of the country, including those areas where the peacekeepers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) were not deployed earlier. We hope that further expansion of United Nations presence will assist in speeding up the

return to normal life for all the citizens of Sierra Leone. We express our gratitude to the Government of Nigeria for the flexibility it has demonstrated regarding the issue of the extension of the dates for the Nigerian contingent's stay in Sierra Leone, which makes it possible to prevent a vacuum in the area of ensuring security and to establish favourable conditions for a build-up of the UNAMSIL presence.

At the same time, we are concerned by the parts of the report that refer to a dangerous trend of escalating tensions between the combatants of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the UNAMSIL military personnel in the field, which has manifested itself in particular in incidents during which obstacles were created to the freedom of movement of UNAMSIL personnel and in which weapons were seized from the military personnel of the Mission.

We note that these unlawful actions follow the same type of logic as the hostile public statements of the leader of the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFP) towards UNAMSIL, and we believe it is appropriate for the Council to warn Mr. Sankoh regarding his personal responsibility for the unpredictable consequences that such incidents may entail. The weapons must be returned to the peacekeepers. Creating obstacles to the implementation of the Mission's mandate is inadmissible.

Russia supports the Secretary-General's view concerning four key areas in which efforts should now be focused to move the peace process in Sierra Leone forward: the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of all former combatants; the extension of State authority to the entire territory of the country, including law enforcement activity; national reconciliation and democratization; and the rebuilding of national security forces. We are convinced that progress on each of these tracks is possible solely in conditions of cooperation between the Government, the RUFP and other Sierra Leonean groups and leaders, which in the final analysis bear fundamental responsibility for the restoration of peace to the country.

We call upon them to actively cooperate with each other and with UNAMSIL in implementing the Lomé Agreement. We emphasize that it is precisely this factor, in our view, that is decisive regarding further international support for the peace process in Sierra Leone. In the light of this approach, Russia is ready to continue to render assistance to United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Sierra Leone. At present, we are at an advanced stage in our negotiations with the Secretariat regarding the allocation to UNAMSIL of a Russian air-support unit.

In expressing our satisfaction with the high level of participation by the international community in the settlement of the conflict in Sierra Leone, we take particular note of the irreplaceable role being played in this context by the leaders of States of the region and of the active and constructive policy of the current Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States, President Konaré of Mali, which have given significant impetus to efforts to strengthen peace.

In conclusion, I support the elements of the presidential statement proposed by Ambassador Greenstock.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Bangladesh.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report. We agree with the steps he has identified for the success of the peace process and with his observations contained in the report.

We would like particularly to thank Ambassador Greenstock for his statement at the outset of our debate, in which he shared with us his first-hand experience with regard to the situation as it exists now in Sierra Leone.

Bangladesh believes that overall progress has been made in Sierra Leone, despite difficulties which continue to exist. We are happy at the role played by regional countries in facilitating the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement. In particular, the role of President Konaré of Mali, in holding, first, the second meeting of the Joint Implementation Committee on 24 January and, then, the special meeting on 1 and 2 March.

However, as the Secretary-General has mentioned in his report, much clearly remains to be done to further the peace process in Sierra Leone. We have a number of concerns. They are in five broad areas.

First, regarding the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), there have been reports of obstruction of UNAMSIL forces, seizure of arms from UNAMSIL troops and refusal to cooperate with UNAMSIL by rebel groups, in particular by elements of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). This is totally unacceptable. UNAMSIL must have freedom of movement. All parties must also cooperate fully with

UNAMSIL during its deployment and discharge of mandate.

We believe that only the early establishment of a credible peacekeeping mission throughout the country can create the security conditions and the climate of confidence that are essential for the successful conclusion of the peace process. Since a substantial part of the deployed UNAMSIL troops are actually forces that had been with the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) mission, it may be important for Mr. Annabi to comment on how smooth and effective was the inclusion of ECOMOG troops in UNAMSIL operations.

Secondly, a particular concern remains about the intent and activity of the RUF, particularly its leader Mr. Sankoh. He has been quick to pledge his total commitment to the peace process, but his deeds have seldom matched his words. In recent months, his activities and those of the RUF have been particularly suspect. RUF is yet to provide a list of combatants and has handed over very few of its weapons. We understand that it possesses a credible force that can break the peace at any time. We believe that the Council should be prepared to take specific measures to force Mr. Sankoh and the RUF to comply fully with the Lomé Peace Agreement. In my capacity as the Chairman of the Sierra Leone sanctions committee, I am doing my best to enforce the sanctions imposed on Mr. Sankoh and his colleagues.

Thirdly, the slow disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process remains a concern. The Secretary-General has mentioned in his report that the slow deployment of UNAMSIL, administrative aspects relating to the functioning of the camps and the lack of a realistic target date and awareness about the modalities of the DDR programme have all been hindrances in this regard. While improving those would help, the success of the programme will ultimately depend on the ability of the Government of Sierra Leone, through its National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and in cooperation with its national and international partners, to set up its efforts to implement all aspects of the DDR programme, which will be important.

In this regard it is also important, as the Secretary-General has also pointed out, to address the question of restructuring of the police and armed forces. Genuine DDR can be achieved only through a national process, under credible authority and with the participation of all parties. In this connection, I would like to ask Mr. Annabi whether he sees a short- or medium-term possibility of the Sierra Leonean police becoming an effective force. Is there any possibility for their deployment in the DDR sites?

Fourthly, the extension of state control over the territory of Sierra Leone is a must for a sustainable peace. This aspect is closely linked to my previous point. Unless a democratically elected national Government has administrative control over all the provinces, including the Northern and Eastern Provinces, as well as on economic activities, including the exploitation of the country's strategic resources, there cannot be a successful DDR process, reintegration of former combatants or an end to illegal mining of diamonds and other resources that continue to boost the ability of former rebels to renew hostilities. UNAMSIL, as is pointed out rightly in the report, has no mandate to step in to prevent illegal economic activities. I believe that the Council can look at this limitation closely in future.

Fifthly and finally, the continued violation of the human rights of Sierra Leoneans, including abductions, and the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the country are matters of concern. Recent reports that former rebels have committed atrocities near areas where UNAMSIL has been deployed are indicative of the relative impunity they enjoy. Also, humanitarian personnel have been obstructed and assistance has not reached people in need. We consider that these are among the priorities that need to be looked at by the Council.

In conclusion, let me thank Mr. Annabi for his excellent presentation. We agree with him about the proposal to extend the periodic reporting from 45 to 60 days.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The representative of Sierra Leone has asked to speak. I invite him to make his statement.

Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone): May I, through you, Sir, thank the Council for giving us the opportunity to speak in this meeting of the Council on the situation in Sierra Leone. It is a pleasure to see you, Sir. I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency this month and to thank you for your initiative in convening this open briefing. We believe that these meetings serve as useful barometres of the interest which the Council and the whole international community attach

to the plight of the people of Sierra Leone and their fervent hope for lasting peace.

Please allow me also to pay a tribute to your predecessor, the representative of Argentina, for directing the affairs of the Council last month.

My delegation would also like to say a word of welcome to Ambassador Greenstock, who has just returned from Sierra Leone. I should like to thank him sincerely for giving members of the Council a lucid and candid assessment of the current situation in our country. His remarks were an unofficial but credible addendum to the report of the Secretary-General. On behalf of my delegation, I would like to commend the United Kingdom for sending such a high-level delegation to assess the situation on the spot. This latest initiative by the Government of the United Kingdom is exemplary and timely, especially in the context of what needs to be done in facilitating the peace process.

Allow me to say a few words to Sir Jeremy about a compatriot of his. A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to travel with High Commissioner Penfold, who is fondly called "Chief Komrabai" by the people of Sierra Leone. We went to Bo, Pujehun and Kenema. Allow me to express our thanks to him. We understand that he is leaving. He has done a fantastic job, and we wish him well in his new assignment.

We have taken note of the Secretary-General's latest report, and the update provided orally to the Council by Mr. Annabi this morning, and we thank him for his clarification. We also acknowledge the general conclusion that the peace process as a whole has been slow and that there has been little progress in disarmament in the northern and eastern parts of the country. For its part, the Government of Sierra Leone has consistently demonstrated its commitment to all aspects of the peace process. Regrettably, as Ambassador Greenstock stated this morning, we cannot say the same for the other party to the Lomé Peace Agreement. Indeed, the finger should be directed at the main stumbling block, the main obstacle that stands in the way of the peace process.

That is why we welcome the Secretary-General's assessment that serious doubts remain about the commitment of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to the peace process. Events on the ground — as we have heard from Sir Jeremy — and certain utterances by the RUF leader, in our view, justify the observation — indeed, the conclusion — in the report that the RUF should immediately take convincing measures to dispel these doubts. In this connection, we welcome the statement which you, Mr. President, made to the press last week on behalf of the Council. In our view, it was a forthright message to Mr. Foday Sankoh to take disarmament seriously — and it is about time. The people of Sierra Leone are encouraged by this approach, which obviously complements the activities of UNAMSIL on the ground.

I should like to add that the people of Sierra Leone also welcome the firm stand which the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Sierra Leone, Ambassador Olu Adeniji, has been taking in Mr. Sankoh's encounters with the United Nations.

As part of the Government's confidence-building measures, President Kabbah recently undertook the first in a series of disarmament campaign visits to several parts of the country. He visited Bo, Pujehun and Kenema. He wanted to help break the cycle of distrust, suspicion and misconception. I want to emphasize the word "misconception", because there are certain misconceptions about the whole disarmament process. He also explained the benefits of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. In the areas he visited, and in response to his appeal, there was an impressive disarmament exercise by the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) which was not merely symbolic. The CDF told us of, and demonstrated, their willingness to disarm completely and speedily in the interests of peace in our country. We had hoped that the RUF and others would not merely reciprocate but would fulfil their obligations under the Lomé Peace Agreement.

President Kabbah has challenged all ex-combatants, wherever they are, to disarm for the good of the nation. He has challenged all the commanders to urge their men and women in arms to join in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). The President challenged all those who say "There is no more war in Sierra Leone" but who refuse to disarm, to remove the threat of war, namely the weapons. We hope that Mr. Sankoh and others have heard the message and will take immediate steps to accept the challenge. We also hope that he and others will heed the message which is emerging in this Council today. Mr. Sankoh should not hold the entire nation hostage. We know that thousands of former RUF fighters are ready and willing to disarm.

Disarmament and demobilization remain the highest-priority issues on the peace agenda. Disarmament and demobilization are closely linked to the question of

security in Sierra Leone, the protection of human rights, the unimpeded flow of humanitarian relief to victims of the rebel war and, of course, to the capacity of the nation to concentrate on rehabilitation and reconstruction of the economy and other aspects of the life and livelihood of the nation.

The planting season is rapidly approaching. The farmers want to go back to their farms to grow food to feed the people. How can we speak of national reconciliation when the combatants are still holding on to their weapons? How can we expect the victims of atrocities to forgive, when the perpetrators are still equipped with the weapons of war? In this regard, we fully endorse the Secretary-General's view that there is a general, clear need for all the stakeholders to agree on a realistic target date for the completion of the disarmament and demobilization of all combatants. We agree that as a first step, the RUF should provide, as a matter or urgency, full and complete information on the number of RUF combatants under its command and ensure that they comply with the DDR process. We urgently need a target date for disarmament and demobilization. The process cannot and should not be prolonged indefinitely.

The President: I thank the representative of Sierra Leone for the kind words he addressed to me and my colleagues.

I shall now give the floor to Mr. Annabi to respond to some of the comments which have been made here and the questions raised.

Mr. Annabi: I shall begin with the questions asked by the Ambassador of the Netherlands. As regards the reference in paragraph 26 of the report to the launching of a community rehabilitation and reintegration programme last month, this refers to a number of projects which include training in vocational skills and employment opportunities through the promotion of small businesses and small business credits, accelerated eduction programmes and programmes designed to encourage literacy, as well as social counselling programmes to people who may have suffered during the civil war. These projects are to be financed through the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

As regards the reference in paragraph 48 to the establishment of mechanisms to allow the Government and people of Sierra Leone to reap the benefits of the country's strategic resources, I apologize for the somewhat cryptic sentence. What it really means — and this is something that is shared by everyone — is that we would very much like to see the benefits that have been reaped from the diamond exploitation and have been used to prosecute the war now used to support the peace process and the development and reconstruction process.

The Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development, which is chaired by Foday Sankoh, has been formally established, but the problem is that it has not really started working. It has not yet adopted a proper plan of action or programme of work. It has not started to follow up on the Government's own efforts in terms of taxation, legislation and various measures that are needed to control the diamond exploitation activities to ensure that these resources can be effectively put to use to support the peace process and the reconstruction process.

In response to the questions of the Ambassador of Jamaica regarding the national commission on strategic resources, I am not sure whether the reference by the Ambassador of Jamaica to hearings refers to hearings of the commission itself — I indicated that the commission had not started its work — or to the hearings held recently in the Sierra Leone Parliament. Foday Sankoh and Johnny Paul Koroma were both invited to attend hearings of the national Parliament. Mr. Koroma did attend, as requested by the Parliament, but Mr. Sankoh did not come and did not respond to the invitation extended to him.

Regarding the deployment of civilian police personnel, we hope to deploy — as members of the Council will recall — some 60 civilian police officers. I must say that we have offers for perhaps half of that number at this point. So additional offers would be welcome, and of course we will start deploying those civilian police officers from countries that have made these offers on the understanding that we need to keep an acceptable geographical balance in this regard. So we will start the deployment soon and hope to receive in the meantime additional offers from interested Member States.

The Ambassador of Jamaica also expressed concern about the withdrawal of two humanitarian organizations from Kabala and another location in the northern part of the country. While it is true that these two organizations have withdrawn as a result of the attacks by Revolutionary United Front elements against them on 7 May, my humanitarian colleagues have asked me to stress that humanitarian operations, which have been

recently established in Makeni, are continuing and that further work is being undertaken to expand humanitarian assistance wherever access becomes possible.

In regard to your own questions, Sir, on the incorporation of the ECOMOG troops, we have currently three ECOWAS countries who were participating in ECOMOG and are now providing troops to UNAMSIL: Nigeria, Guinea and Ghana. As you know, initially two Nigerian battalions were inducted into UNAMSIL. An additional two other battalions and a tank company are also in the process of being incorporated into UNAMSIL. A battalion from Ghana and a battalion from Guinea have been inducted. We are working actively with these contributors, both here and in the field, to ensure that the equipment shortfalls are met as soon as possible, so that these troops are fully equipped to perform the mandate given to them by the Security Council.

I think that the contingent for which the incorporation has been less smooth, perhaps, was the battalion from Guinea, which was not deployed as expeditiously as we had hoped. As you know, as this battalion was on its way to join UNAMSIL it allowed RUF elements to take away a large part of its weapons and equipment. So we are working on all these issues to try to improve the capacity of UNAMSIL to meet the challenges before it.

As regards the Sierra Leone police, it is a fact that their activities remain limited to the western part of the country. The police force in Sierra Leone suffered greatly from the war, and it is not that easy to recreate a police force. Nevertheless, the police are active in the western part of the country, as well as in Freetown. They very much lack the necessary equipment and other facilities that they need to be able to fulfil their tasks. Any support that may be provided by individual donors would be very much appreciated.

We hope that as access throughout the country improves and as security conditions improve, the police will be able to deploy further, with the help of the important programme of assistance that is being provided by the Commonwealth Police Task Force and by the UNAMSIL civilian police advisors that will deploy to support and advise the Sierra Leone police in their work.

I would like to thank the members of the Council for their understanding and support regarding the reporting schedule. We will therefore, with the Council's concurrence, submit the next report to the Council by 7 May, which is exactly 60 days from the last one. We will do this on the understanding, of course, that we will always be ready, on a regular basis, to provide oral updates or briefings to the Council on any significant developments that may occur.

In this connection, and to conclude, I would like to mention that Mr. Miyet, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations — who is currently on an important mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to prepare for the deployment of the operation authorized by the Council at the end of last month — will also visit Freetown, as part of his current trip to Africa. We expect him to arrive there over the weekend. The point of his visit is to take a firsthand look at the work of UNAMSIL and meet with all the parties concerned and see what we can all do together to further this peace process and improve its chances of success.

The President: I thank Mr. Annabi for his response to various issues raised during our debate this morning and later this afternoon. I believe that we can agree on the following course of action.

First, we can agree on a statement to the press to be made following our debate, and I will identify the elements right now. Secondly, we can agree to extend the time limit for the periodic reports from 45 to 60 days. As Mr. Annabi has said, the next report on Sierra Leone would therefore be available on 7 May.

Perhaps I can at this point identify the elements for the press statement. As many representatives have mentioned, during his presentation Ambassador Greenstock identified four elements, and subsequently Ambassador Soderberg in her statement identified two elements, which can be included in the press statement.

We will say, then, that members of the Security Council endorse, in general, the conclusions of the Secretary-General's report (S/2000/186). The second point is that the Council members place great weight on the early implementation of all aspects of the Lomé Peace Agreement and commend the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Oluyemi Adeniji, and of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to this end. The third element would be that Council members express their disappointment at the slow progress being made in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process in particular.

The fourth element would that the Council members call upon all signatories to the Lomé Agreement, and in particular upon Chairman Sankoh and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), to reaffirm and demonstrate their concrete commitment to the Lomé peace process by allowing the extension of State authority throughout Sierra Leone, in full cooperation with UNAMSIL and with the United Nations team as a whole, and by instructing the RUF membership to disarm and to surrender all weapons, including their heavy weapons, mines and anti-aircraft equipment.

The fifth element would be that Council members urge Member State strictly to enforce the travel ban imposed by the Council and to remind concerned Sierra Leone leaders of their obligation to obtain exemptions before travelling abroad, without exception. The final element would be that Council members welcome the upcoming donor conference in London on 27 March and urge Members to participate and contribute generously to the peace process and development efforts in Sierra Leone.

These are the elements that can be incorporated in the statement to the press after the conclusion of our meeting. I hope that this is acceptable to all.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4112

Security Council
Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4112th Meeting
Wednesday, 15 March 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Martinsen
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Kasse
	Namibia	Mr. Theron
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (S/2000/150)

00-34498 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (S/2000/150)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Haiti, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Lelong (Haiti) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti, document S/2000/150.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General dated 25 February 2000 (S/2000/150) submitted in accordance with resolution 1277 (1999) of 30 November 1999.

"The Security Council commends the Representative of the Secretary-General, the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH), the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) and all the previous missions deployed in Haiti for assisting the Haitian Government in supporting the professionalization of the Haitian National Police (HNP) force, consolidating Haiti's system of justice and other national institutions and promoting human rights. The Council expresses its thanks to all the countries which took part in and contributed to the success of MIPONUH, MICIVIH and all the previous missions deployed in Haiti, particularly the troop-contributing countries.

"The Security Council recognizes that the people and the Government of Haiti bear the ultimate responsibility for national reconciliation, the maintenance of a secure and stable environment, the administration of justice and the reconstruction of their country and that the Government of Haiti bears particular responsibility for the further strengthening and effective functioning of the HNP and the justice system. The Council considers that timely, free and fair elections are crucial to democracy and all aspects of Haiti's development and strongly urges Haitian authorities to work cooperatively together in order to finalize arrangements for holding credible elections as rapidly as possible so as to restore, promptly and fully, the lapsed Parliament and independent local governments.

"The Security Council commends the Secretary-General for ensuring a phased transition to the International Civilian Support Mission in Haiti (MICAH) and recognizes that economic rehabilitation and reconstruction constitute a major task facing the Government and people of Haiti and that significant international assistance is indispensable for the sustainable development of Haiti.

"The Security Council recognizes the success of cooperative efforts in bringing about the mandate for this new mission in Haiti and notes with satisfaction the contributions made by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in this regard. The Security Council welcomes the initiative of the Economic and Social Council to develop a strategic framework and a comprehensive approach for a long-term United Nations programme of support for Haiti and underlines the vital link between national stability and economic and social development.

"The Security Council expects the Secretary-General to keep it informed, as appropriate, of the situation in Haiti and, in particular, the progress achieved in the electoral process."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2000/8.

The meeting rose at 10.25 p.m.